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Thursday 28 January 1993

Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and Adjustment
Board Act, 1993

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième intersession, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 28 janvier 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre



Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Thursday 28 January 1993

The committee met at 1000 in committee room 1.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

OTAB BUSINESS STEERING COMMITTEE

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 10 am and we're going to begin because this is when we're scheduled to begin.

The first participant this morning is the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board business steering committee. People, welcome. Please tell us your names, your titles or positions within that committee, and proceed with your comments. Please try to save the last 15 minutes of the half-hour for questions and dialogue.

Mr John Howatson: My name is John Howatson and I'm the chair of the OTAB business steering committee. I also, as a part-time job, am director of human resources for the Canadian Manufacturers' Association.

Ms Sandra Stewart: My name is Sandra Stewart. I'm a member of the business steering committee and I happen to be the director of corporate affairs for Stelco.

Mr Howatson: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. My name is, as I said, John Howatson. I am chair of the OTAB business steering committee, and I am joined by Sandra Stewart.

Our committee was formed 13 months ago in order to input into the OTAB consultation process and to coordinate the activities of the business community. The steering committee is made up of 12 major business organizations representing a wide cross-section of employers, and we've attached a list in our presentation for your information. We also represent the OTAB business reference group, which is made up of approximately 65 other business and employer associations. We have met with them on a regular basis to ensure that our direction best represents the broad business interests in Ontario.

The business steering committee's presentation addresses three specific aspects: the focus of the bill, the need for wealth creation to achieve the bill's objectives, and the importance of affordability. Throughout the development of our presentation, we'll be referring to specific sections of Bill 96 and offering some suggestions for amendments that we believe will enhance the bill.

We've attached to the back of the presentation the amended sections we propose be introduced into the legis-

lation. In conclusion, we will offer additional comments on some of the items that are expected to be covered by regulations, specifically those which continue to be discussed by the steering committees with members of the OTAB project team.

When we started out in December 1991, we were optimistic that OTAB could make a positive and constructive difference. We were encouraged by a similar theme outlined by two separate sources: that competitiveness and investment are precursors to job creation and training.

The first source is a recommendation in Premier Peterson's Premier's Council paper entitled People and Skills in the New Global Economy, which states:

"Ontario should establish an OTAB. This board would be a bipartite management and labour authority to provide strategic direction for the funding and delivery of workplace training and adjustment activities in the province."

Under this recommendation, there were a number of significant points. Let me highlight a few:

— It would transfer responsibility for Ontario's workplace training strategy out of government ministries to the labour market partners, where the demand originates, the decisions are needed and the solutions are delivered.

— The OTAB, through associated training committees, will determine the needs and requirements for workplace-related training in the province, ensure that delivery systems are adequate and allocate much of the training moneys spent.

— It is imperative that genuine authority for program and funding decisions be vested in OTAB.

— This authority will nevertheless have to be exercised within a framework of government accountability.

— The Premier's Council cautions against the new training structure becoming an elaborate bureaucracy that is even more complicated than the one it is designed to replace.

The second source is the consultation paper issued by the current government entitled Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership for Ontario. The report makes the following points:

The key to continued prosperity is the development of industries which will rely on well-paid, highly educated, highly trained men and women.

OTAB will be an agency of the government of Ontario and will operate as an independent, self-governing organization. OTAB will have financial and administrative control over Ontario's publicly funded training and labour force development programs.

We believe that Bill 96 has strayed from the original purposes of the two OTAB proposals.

Now let me turn the presentation over to Sandra Stewart for the next part.

Ms Stewart: Turning to the specific comments on Bill 96 and starting with the intent, the business steering committee, first of all, supports the vision outlined in the executive summary of *Skills to Meet the Challenge*:

"As structural adjustment of Ontario's economy continues, one truth has emerged: The success or failure of firms, particularly those using new technologies and manufacturing processes, is going to depend increasingly upon 'knowledge' and its application. The key to continued prosperity is the development of industries which rely on well-paid, highly educated and trained men and women.

"At the same time, the achievement of both economic competitiveness and equitable social participation is becoming more and more crucial."

The business community recognizes that training is part of our future. We are, however, concerned about the level of expectation that Bill 96 is creating.

In its current form, Bill 96 tries to be all things to all people. Referring to the intent of the bill outlined in the purposes clause, Bill 96 is expected to improve "the lives of workers and potential workers." In our opinion, this is too broad a mandate for a bill which is to be established strictly to address publicly funded training for workers and potential workers who are interested in training in order to be able to participate in and contribute to a competitive economy in a meaningful way, meaningful for the workers and their employers.

Although access to OTAB-funded programs and services will lead to improving the lives of some workers and/or potential workers, it will certainly not improve the lives of all workers and/or potential workers.

We must recognize that, in the first place, people will make their own choices about whether or not to access training and, if so, they will also make personal decisions about the specific training that interests them. Those who want and pursue training will be motivated by different factors and for varying reasons. Some will want to enter or re-enter the workforce. Others will be interested in attempting to maintain their situation through periods of adjustment. There will be individuals who want to stabilize or secure their circumstances by keeping up with changing technology. Still others will have a sheer desire to continue to learn along the lines of a lifelong learning culture that's promoted in *Skills to Meet the Challenge*.

The point is that the issue of improvement is an entirely personal and totally subjective state. To assume access to OTAB programs and services will deliver on improving "the lives of workers and potential workers" is unrealistic. For this reason, we suggest that clause 1(b) and paragraph 4(1)5 should be modified. We offer two suggestions.

First, either delete the phrase improving "the lives of workers and potential workers," or add to that phrase, completing the section, "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals."

In the absence of qualifying the publicly funded training that OTAB is to address, we fear the bill's focus on access is creating a second unrealistic expectation. We've

already stated that training must be a part of our future. However, the training will only benefit workers, potential workers and employers if the training is appropriate. We are not alone in this view.

The OTAB process that we have been involved in during these past many months has, as I'm sure you know, brought the labour market partners together in discussion on several occasions. One of the foremost messages we have received from those representing the equity groups is their vital interest in appropriate training. They do not want training for the sake of training; they want training for employability. We strongly recommend that the word "appropriate" be inserted particularly in clause 1(a) and paragraph 4(1)13, immediately preceding the phrase "labour force development programs."

There is one further recommendation that we have for the purposes clause. Whatever motivates workers and/or potential workers to seek training, let us not forget that there is another and equally important side of the equation, which is participation in the workforce and contribution to a competitive economy. To acknowledge this, we believe section 1 should be expanded to include a new part (a) as follows:

"To recognize the need for a competitive Ontario workforce that would form the basis for both wealth and job creation."

On the subject of wealth creation and affordability, I would like to make the following comments. Although there are minor indications that our economy is beginning to emerge from the latest recession, our recovery will be slow. It is well known that Ontario, the single, largest contributor to Canada's GDP, was particularly hard hit by the recession and that the current state of our fiscal situation is serious.

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We must recognize that there is a need to renew our wealth-creation capability in order to sustain, and in due course perhaps even raise, our standard of living, including in terms of social programs. We cannot, however, expect the second outcome without initially accomplishing the first. The issue confronting us right now is one of affordability.

The development and implementation of this new training structure called OTAB has fallen prey to a fair degree of criticism due to this very issue. It, and its accompanying local board structure, is viewed by many to be creating additional layers of bureaucracy that will merely consume more of our scarce resources, which are public funds, without adding any new value. This is confusing for people, particularly given the general state of our fiscal situation and the growing perception that government is poised to rationalize and downsize the public service, not expand it.

Training must be streamlined in order to minimize duplication and administration. In establishing OTAB, we must refrain from building a multi-tier bureaucracy that has the potential to be more onerous and expensive than the existing system.

We understand that the intention is to amalgamate the numerous training programs and services currently offered by several different ministries under one body. The business

steering committee supports this restructuring, provided the goal is to eliminate duplication and achieve greater efficiencies. If this does not occur, then the cost of the physical amalgamation will simply be a further drain on scarce resources, as will the newly created and unnecessary layer of bureaucracy. Simply put, we are interested in effective and efficient delivery of training programs. To us, this is critical, and it must be the top priority.

Members of society, whether we are talking about individuals or organizations, are feeling stretched to the limit and are both unable and unwilling to contribute any more to the public purse. If, under OTAB, we are hoping to accomplish more training, we are going to have to achieve this by squeezing more out of all aspects of our current infrastructure.

This not only means a concerted and focused effort on directing existing training funds so that we achieve the desired outcome of more training; it also means maximizing the use of other existing social program dollars. If we are serious about preparing people to enter and re-enter the workforce as early as possible, we should be insisting that training be linked to a much greater proportion of our social benefits.

The opportunity for a truly significant win-win situation is before us, and it is one that would create gains for all aspects of society. We would be helping more people entering or re-entering the workforce to develop and achieve their personal development and economic goals. This would ultimately reduce the drain on public funds, and more training would be accomplished through our existing infrastructure, therefore making it more productive.

I'd now like to turn the podium back to John.

Mr Howatson: In conclusion, We have discussed the intent of the bill: wealth creation and affordability. There are a few final points we wish to bring to your attention.

Under section 9, "Directors": The business steering committee has been responsible for recruiting candidates for the OTAB business caucus. We are prepared to select one of the eight business candidates as co-chair. However, we also feel that the eight members of the caucus should have some input after they have had a chance to work with each other. Therefore, we suggest that paragraph 9(2)1 be deleted and that 9(2)2 be modified to, I quote, "Eight directors representing business, one of whom shall be co-chair." A similar change would also be appropriate for the labour co-chair.

Under section 30, "Regulations": Several items to be covered by regulations are currently being discussed with the OTAB project team and in our opinion need to be resolved before the OTAB governing body is struck.

Under clause 30(1)(b) in legislation, the business community, through its broad reference group, has indicated that it agrees with the concept of making decisions by consensus. However, we recognize there may be occasions when this will not be possible. We believe a procedure to deal with this situation is required and recommend that a double majority for the two main partners, business and labour, would be most appropriate.

Under clause 30(1)(d), in the mandate discussions leading up to the legislation, all seven partners agree to the

concept that there would be strong, empowered local boards operating under broad guidelines developed by the governing body. Words acknowledging this agreement do not appear in this bill, and should.

That ends our presentation this morning. Thank you for your attention. Questions would be welcomed.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): Thank you for your presentation. I found it very interesting and quite helpful as we wrestle with what's in Bill 96 and, increasingly, what's not in Bill 96.

I would like, if I might, to refer immediately to the last page of your presentation. Speaking about the local boards, you used, in quotes, the word "empowered." I'm wondering if you can expand on that particular recommendation and then maybe we can have some dialogue on the aspects of local boards.

Mr Howatson: The matter was discussed fully, as I indicated, with all those different steering committees and most of us came down to the conclusion that in order to make OTAB successful there has to be solid input from local communities. We believe these are where the people know what's required in the way of training. We know that's where the champions and the volunteers are who will make things happen. Therefore, we felt that an all-knowing, all-seeing central body couldn't do the same job as local boards, but we also felt they couldn't do this strictly on their own and they had to operate within broad guidelines established by the governing body.

Mr Offer: Under the legislation there is no mandatory creation for local boards. It's left in some nebulous type of zone, that they may or may not be formed in areas which we do not know, under guidelines, criteria and factors which are also unknown. I think, in fairness, that the government members have continually indicated this cannot be done in any way other than regulation because of the need for cooperation from the federal partners. I wonder if you could comment on that.

Mr Howatson: That's our understanding as well. Obviously, we would love to have seen it in the legislation, but we are led to believe that you cannot involve another government in your own legislation, so therefore we believe the formation of local boards has to be a dual federal-Ontario responsibility. Both groups are very much interested in local boards, federal funds will be flowing to local boards, so obviously they will have a major say in how those local boards are set up.

Mr Offer: In the event the federal and provincial governments are not able to arrive at a consensual conclusion to the formation of these boards, can the local boards be effective just continuing on exclusively within a provincial sphere?

Mr Howatson: Again, they could be effective if, as I said, they are given the power to make the things happen that we think should happen. As long as those guidelines are there, then if it's only under a provincial jurisdiction but they are empowered, they are strong and set up properly, then I think they can make a difference.

Mr Offer: I would imagine, without putting words in your mouth, that you would like to see, in legislative form

as opposed to by way of regulation, a clearer direction as to the creation of these local boards.

Mr Howatson: You don't have to put words in our mouth. We heartily agree.

Ms Stewart: May I just supplement that? For the overall effectiveness of the system, it would seem to me that the federal government needs to participate jointly with the province for these local boards to work; otherwise you have two systems, in effect. We're clearly not interested in inefficiencies; we're interested in efficiencies and effectiveness. So for us, the local board structure could work. We need to see it referred to in law so that it can work to its best degree. We would support an expansion or an elaboration of reference to the local board structure within the legislation, if that were possible.

Mr Offer: This is probably the last question that's going to be allowed in our time frame. We have asked for and received from the ministry the number of programs of a training or adjustment nature now being provided, and they total something in the area of 44 programs. It is also indicated that not more than 22 of those programs may fall within OTAB—in other words, fully 22 will not—and currently, of the 22 that may fall within OTAB, 15 are found within one ministry. I'm wondering if this has something to do with the very important point you made in terms of expectation; what OTAB is, what it is to accomplish. I'm wondering if you can share with us whether this is your expectation as to what OTAB will in fact be doing.

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Mr Howatson: Obviously, it goes against what we initially anticipated OTAB would do. I think that in our presentation we tried to highlight the fact that two different governments, through different processes, have come to the realization that private sector partners should play a major role. We were led to believe that all programs would be reviewed by the governing body and then determination would be made by the private sector partners as to what's appropriate, as opposed to the other way around. If we are being told that this is the way it will be, we have some problems with that.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Thank you very much for appearing before us today. I'm not sure whether my colleague was here yesterday when I made the point that we have been in touch with the federal government, the minister's office. It's my understanding, in asking the question, that there are four priorities with regard to the local boards and I just wanted to share them with you today. Perhaps Mr Sutherland would like to respond, because this is a question that I asked before and I didn't get the response, so I've got it myself.

The Canadian training and labour adjustment board has been given the direction—and it concurs with the minister's office—that local boards should be grass-roots, appointed locally by the local community. I know you agree with me on this. In fact, the second point they made was that, as far as possible, where local boards are in place now, industrial training boards, for want of a better word, whatever the local communities call them, where the ex-

pertise has been developed, serious consideration should be made for continuity.

I'm putting this on the record, so if somebody wants to argue he can phone the minister's office and argue with me. The third point they made is that they should be responsible for funding, which I found rather interesting. Otherwise, you'll get your block of funding and the priorities should come from the local body itself. You know, right now I can't remember it, but maybe I'll slip it to Mr Sutherland and he can tell you during his time, but I thought, and I think everybody agreed yesterday afternoon, that the priorities were right on. Mr Ramsay was here. I think that's the kind of thing. In fact, if that is important, it should be put into the bill itself. I would not be hesitant about where that ought to go. If there are certain directions where the federal government and the provincial government agree, it could be put in the legislation, and that has to be a recommendation from this committee for change. We'll be putting the appropriate amendment forward. Perhaps the government will; I don't know. But you're not alone in making your presentation, is my point.

I'm interested in your expanding upon the regulations, section 30, where you make the global statement, "Several items to be covered by regulations are currently being discussed with the OTAB project team and, in our opinion, need to be resolved before the OTAB governing body is struck." A number of presenters have made this point, that there are a number of issues that they don't feel comfortable about being left to the regs; they ought to be in the body of the legislation. Others have said that some could more properly be placed in the regulations. I think there's consensus that we need to see the regs before we proceed, because if we don't know what they look like, how are we going to know whether they ought to, in our opinion, be put in the legislation or otherwise? Could you give us some examples of some of the concerns you might be looking at there, some of the issues?

Mr Howatson: Just as an example, in regulations it does talk about how they will discuss how local boards will be formed and what powers they will have. Obviously, that is a concern of the business community, that it somehow be reflected. We also are talking about the decision-making process. We talked about that in our presentation, that consensus is the best way to operate, but that there have to be other things in place to address the fact that there may be some points that never reach consensus. How do you settle those matters?

We also were concerned about the governance of the governing body and how that's structured and discussions are continuing on those, though that may be something that can be solved without putting it into legislation.

But maybe if I could go back to something you said, it's not in our presentation, but we feel very strongly, again under the concept of affordability, that if you do have bodies in place like CITCs or Ontario skills development offices or the Ontario Training Corp, those should form the basis and be refined, if needed, in the future OTAB structure. Sandra, do you have some comments?

Ms Stewart: No, I think you've covered the ground-work.

Mrs Cunningham: I just want make a clarification with regard to working with the federal government. I think we in Ontario should be putting in what we feel the principles are for local training boards and that the working relationship with the federal government for funding or anything else can be done just as it's done now. But I think we have to make a statement with regard to training and how it's going to work within our own structure in this province, because that's why some of the private trainers are not investing in our young people or in retraining: There's not the proper structure in which to invest.

The Chair: Thank you; point made. Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Thank you, Mr Howatson and Ms Stewart, for your presentation. I certainly found it thought-provoking, and I'm sure my colleagues did as well. It certainly reflects, I think, your work with the business steering committee, which shows that you have gone over these issues. I think your responses to the questions show too that you're aware of the approach that has to be taken on this issue if it's going to reflect the sharing among the labour market partners.

At this approach, I mention in particular the programs that are going to be transferred. Certainly, the idea is to bring as many programs as possible. As you say, that will be done with consultation between the project team and the board, including government review as well.

The local boards have come up for quite a bit of discussion here, I think, because we all recognize that there is the interest in the local community, and we all live in those local communities so we know that's where the jobs are going to occur and where the training has to take place, and where, I guess, the outcome of these programs will be seen.

The problem, as you've also noted, is that it has to be done in consultation with the federal government and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, as well as our government and the governing board, when it's established. In fact, that's what the legislation is primarily designed to do: to set up the board. It isn't to set up the local boards. They are certainly mentioned, to say that it's a prominent feature of the overall object, but it's not the purpose of the legislation.

Secondly, there is no legislation or regulations governing CITCs, for instance. There's simply a program that's set up to carry out a mandate of the government, just with policy guidelines, not with regulations. So this is something that will be established in the course once the board is set up. Again, we recognize the importance, but the main thrust of this legislation is the governing board.

With your background, though, in the consultation through the steering committee that you're a member of, I was just wondering what your feeling is for the future as far as the level of consultation with the other labour market partners is concerned; that is, how well this system will work with the client-driven nature of it as opposed to the top-down approach, which comes from programs designed by people who have the expertise in designing programs

rather than perhaps answering the needs that are in the community.

Mr Howatson: Just based on our own experience, it took some time. When you put people together and ask them to focus their efforts on solving problems, we've found, in working with the other steering committees, that it took some time, because we had to listen to the other folks before we moved on. Obviously, everybody comes in with his own point of view and his own direction, but if you do listen and you do respond to those words from the other communities, I think the future bodes well for all those groups working together. From what I've heard, everybody recognizes a lot of the goals of the other groups, so I would say we could be very successful in this OTAB structure.

Ms Stewart: I wonder if I may elaborate on the second part of your question, about the client-driven approach. I think it's fair to reiterate what we've already said about empowered local boards and the need to clearly recognize them in the legislation. We would favour that.

Mr Gary Wilson: You'd favour that. Sorry, I don't understand, then.

Ms Stewart: As we've said—in fact, the last point in our presentation, the reference to empowered local boards—we would favour that appearing in the legislation to get at the very issue you raised, which is a bottom-up, client-driven approach.

Mr Gary Wilson: The evidence that has been given throughout about the design of the governing board and the OTAB approach suggests that it has to be that kind of interaction. But you are also a member of the CMA, or at least do work for it, which is a national body, so I think it suggests the interaction that has to exist; that the overall picture is important as well and that resources have to be moved among the different areas to get the best use out of the areas. We've had presentations that have mentioned that, that they don't want to be going down blind alleys when a larger view might have prevented that sort of thing; that there is some guidance to the overall provincial direction and there is strength to be gained from that as well.

This question has arisen before. I've asked several other people what they hope for in the consultation process.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Wilson. Wrap it up.

Mr Gary Wilson: When people are treated as equals—and it speaks to the issue of the improvement of workers' and potential workers' lives—it's simply a beginning. When workers feel they are treated as equals, that they have a stake in the kinds of programs that are being developed for their purposes and that they'll get a chance to discuss it, that is an element of this.

Ms Stewart: May I respond to that?

The Chair: A brief period of time to respond? Go right ahead.

Ms Stewart: We believe, in the context of improving the lives of workers and potential workers, what we suggested makes eminent sense.

The Chair: I want to express the committee's gratitude to the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board business

steering committee, and especially to you, Mr Howatson, and you, Ms Stewart, for taking the time to attend here today and for sharing your views with us. You've made a valuable contribution to the committee process, and we are grateful to you. Please keep in touch. Take care.

The next participant is the Women's Access to Training Coalition, Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk. We're recessed till 10:45.

The committee recessed at 1032 and resumed at 1047.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO TRAINING COALITION, BRANT-HALDIMAND-NORFOLK

The Chair: We are going to resume. The next participant is the Women's Access to Training Coalition, Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk. Please tell us your names and your titles or positions, if any. We've got your written submissions, which will form part of the record by virtue of being made an exhibit. Please try to save the second 15 minutes of our half-hour for questions and dialogue with committee members.

Ms Mary Jane Wratten: I'm Mary Jane Wratten, representing the Brant Women's Access to Training.

Ms Linda Orme: I'm Linda Orme, representing the Haldimand-Norfolk Women's Access to Training.

As representatives from Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk, we are here today to call attention to two primary points: (1) that the proposed local board boundaries be changed to reflect the needs of the Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk area, and (2) that gender parity on all boards and a strong commitment to women's active participation in the process be an integral part of the OTAB structure.

When looking at the jobs of the future, it is quite evident that women have been left out of the process of planning educational programs. For example, in the fields of computerized drawing or computerized machining, women do not generally possess the necessary prerequisites to access the available training programs. When funding for such programs as WITT, women in trades and technology, is being cut, it serves to exclude women further from access to training programs and therefore access to higher-paying, higher-skilled jobs.

Although educators will argue that there is no gender discrimination in training programs currently offered, we hear from young women that they are being turned off maths and sciences in the school system. This has been verified by a study titled *Young Women in Canada*, completed by the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. This seems to indicate that there are systemic problems within the curricula or presentation of these subjects that cause young women to tune out even though in earlier grades they may have demonstrated a facility for mathematics. We have to ensure that systems are in place to enable women to access training that prepares them for trades as well as apprenticeships. This involves having women involved in the planning process and women's needs taken into consideration when training is designed.

Ms Wratten: Brantford and Haldimand-Norfolk both have access to branches of Ontario colleges as well as excellent private training. We don't see why the women in our communities need to go outside of those communities

for the training. Both Brant and Haldimand-Norfolk have strong agricultural bases. Women in this type of rural environment will approach training differently than women in industrial-based areas. According to a collection of recent studies compiled by Statistics Canada in 1992, titled *Rural and Small Town Canada*, people—and therefore, by extrapolation, women—in rural environments have lower educational levels than their urban counterparts. When designing programs for these women, in many cases more upfront upgrading and life skills may be needed. Women in rural areas also tend to be more isolated so tend to have more fears about entering larger urban centres and institutions.

Realignments of the proposed local board boundaries to create a separate board area for Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk would ensure that the specialized needs of rural residents generally, and in particular the specialized needs of rural women, will be considered in the development and design of training programs for this area.

Ms Orme: The boundary issue is of particular concern to the Haldimand-Norfolk region. Under the proposed boundary of Brant-Hamilton, part of Norfolk is cut off and pulled into the London area and part of Haldimand is cut off and pulled into the Niagara area. The middle part is lumped in with Hamilton-Brant and is given no identity within this local board. For a community that is struggling with a regional identity, keeping the boundaries as they have been currently proposed will only foster the sense of isolation and separateness that the region is currently struggling with in its quest for a real regional identity.

Under the proposal to realign the boundaries to include Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk, Brant retains its identity and Haldimand-Norfolk establishes an identity within the OTAB process. Because the smaller urban centres in Brant county, along with a fairly large rural agricultural component, mirror more closely the makeup of the Haldimand-Norfolk region, this union is seen as a more natural partnership than being included in a partnership that includes the specialized needs of a highly urbanized, heavily industrialized area like Hamilton-Wentworth.

Ms Wratten: Over the nine months since the inception of the process, Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk have identified many similar issues and concerns of the women in our communities. We have designated representatives from the Brant and Haldimand-Norfolk committees who attend each others' meetings in order to stay current and have found that we are working towards common goals and solutions to common concerns.

Ms Orme: In this presentation we have only addressed a couple of the major concerns around the establishment of the OTAB and the boundary issue. We would like to call your attention to an issue identification paper that was distributed at the beginning of this session. This paper covers a number of other concerns that the women's reference groups from Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk have identified for presentation to the OTAB. A copy of today's presentation has also been distributed to allow you to confirm the information presented.

The Chair: Thank you for a presentation that was precise and raised specific issues. The committee is grateful for

that type of approach, I tell you that. Mr Murdoch or Ms Cunningham?

Mrs Cunningham: Could we take a bye for a moment, please?

The Chair: Sure. Mr Sutherland.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Thank you very much for coming today. I believe we've already had the provincial group represented here as well to talk about some of the issues about training for women and accessibility and some of the difficulties there.

You focus a great deal on the boundary issue. This is still going to be one of the great unresolved issues: how the LTABs are set up. Unfortunately, the case is that the boundaries will not be resolved solely by the provincial government. It will be a joint provincial-federal government responsibility. While there's been consultations on that, it would be my sense that in just about every community where discussions have occurred, no one is quite happy with the current boundaries. Certainly many people in my own riding in Oxford have clearly indicated that they're concerned about the boundaries being proposed, that we would be hooked in with a much larger urban centre such as London but would prefer to be with a more rural type of area such as Elgin or Perth.

I just wanted to share with you that I think there are a lot of people who would like to see some of the boundaries changed but that the provincial government by itself is not setting the boundaries; it's in conjunction with the federal government. I'm glad you've come forward to raise that point at this time and hope that as we go forward that issue will be resolved.

Could you just give us a sense of some of the unique programs, maybe, that are going on in Brant-Haldimand right now in terms of training for women?

Ms Orme: That's one of the areas of grave concern. Their funding, as everyone's aware, within the federal government through Employment and Immigration, has been one of the streams that women have in the past accessed for specialized bridging programs, for specialized access programs into other training pre-employment programs or introduction to trades. The funds for these programs are slowly drying up. We see, if this trend continues, that women are going to be excluded from the process.

In our quest for taking people who are currently on unemployment insurance and trying to get them back into jobs—which, again, is a concern, but we can't afford to forget the other side of the problem—one of the specialized programs we currently have is a bridging program in Haldimand-Norfolk for women, which is a pre-employment program. We're in the process of setting up another bridging program, again a pre-employment program. There currently is no funding for a program such as WITT, which would help women explore the area of trades.

Ms Wratten: In Brant in particular, we have the same difficulties with our WITT program. There are also some private sector programs that are aimed specifically at women who have been out of the workforce long-term and are in the process of trying to jump back in and have absolutely no idea what their options are or how to begin

or even how to write a résumé, something as simple as that.

Mr Sutherland: Within your two areas right now, you also mentioned the issue of gender parity on local boards. I was wondering if you could give some sense of what role women are playing in your areas now in the development of local training issues, whether there's involvement in the local CITCs that may exist.

Ms Wratten: Actually, we have good representation of women. I'm really happy about that. When we have our all-committee meetings, I would say that right now we're running at close to half being women, so I think we're striving very hard in our community to begin with gender parity and then continue with it.

Mr Sutherland: Great.

Ms Orme: If I could add to that, in the local reference groups that we've formed, the educators-trainers, the women's reference groups, the reference group for the disabled and the one for the visible minorities have all suggested that the local board reflect the community as it exists so that it accurately represents people with disabilities, women, native people and people of colour.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you for making this presentation. I thought, as I read through your document, that we can't say this enough, that it has to be said over and over again: We have been reassured that the local boards themselves will be accountable for identifying who they want as participants. I think that's good news.

What I wanted to ask you about has more to do with an educational component. You talked about young women being turned off math and sciences. I guess one of the criticisms we're going to hear about this board is that education doesn't have enough representation on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board itself. If you're going to talk about training, where are the school systems? If you're trying to find placements in the community, if you don't train young people in the school systems, especially women in math and sciences, you're missing the boat. I just wondered if your group had had any discussions around that.

Ms Wratten: I think that comes up when we're talking about the bridging programs. For those women who have already been through our educational system and are lacking in those skills, we need something in place to get them from point A to point B. Hopefully, in today's educational system we're already working towards teaching young women they can do anything they want to. We know it's not perfect yet; we hope it's working towards that. In Brant county we've developed a pilot project called Teen Esteem: It's an exercise where women in the community who would be positive role models are going into the four pilot schools and showing young women that, yes, there are other options; they don't have to do something that's traditionally a female role.

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Mrs Cunningham: I wonder if you'd like to comment on an observation that was made to me earlier today when I was meeting with three representatives of different

educational communities. They said that one of the real flaws in the board, if in fact it's supposed to identify training needs, is that there are training systems in place already, and if you really want to do something like train a woman in engineering, that training board ought to be giving direction to the school systems: "This is our need. Can you start now, and start focusing on particular careers?" I thought that was a worthy suggestion. They said they didn't feel that would be the emphasis or perhaps even be a subject of conversation at the board. They just feel that part has been left out.

Ms Orme: From my end, again in the community of Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk, we have an active group working around the stay-in-school initiative. One of the issues that was identified by this particular group is that one of the reasons why young people generally are dropping out of the school system is because it's not relevant to them. They don't see how their education in the school system, especially the early school years, ties in with a career in the future.

What we've started to work on is, at a community level, trying to get more involvement with role modelling into the elementary schools and so on, because it's been found that when a young child in grade 3 comes home and says, "I hate school, Mom. I don't want to go," they're already turning off learning; by the time they get to high school, a lot of times these kids are looking at it from the perspective of, "I can hardly wait till I'm 16 and I can get that job and I'm out of here, because this doesn't mean anything to me in a real, practical sense."

When we look at the fact maybe less than 20% of children who go to high school go on to university and community colleges, maybe the focus of our education at the earlier years should be redirected to take into account the learning styles of the 80% who are not going on to university or college rather than exclusively focused on the 20% who go on to post-secondary education.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm a great proponent of that.

Mr Chairman, tell me when my time's up; not at this moment, I hope.

The other point that was made is the lack of apprenticeship training, and you talked about bridging. If students are really not happy with their education, perhaps the formal school training and the apprenticeship training should be going on at the same time. That's where the school boards have advised me, in my position as critic, that this OTAB thing is missing out, unless we write that in to be one of the objectives of OTAB: that the training needs that are defined ought to be relayed to school boards in local communities and that the apprenticeship training should start much sooner, in cooperation with school systems, for young people who are finding that the education isn't relevant. Perhaps getting out, working on the job with an apprenticeship training and going to school at the same time, like they do in Europe, would be appropriate for Ontario.

Ms Orme: Exactly. That's what I was going to comment on. With the European model, children seem to be given or shown a lot more options at an earlier stage than children here. It seems to be that in high school the focus

is primarily talking about the professionals, in the sense of doctors or lawyers and sometimes engineering, because engineering is tied into mathematics, which a lot of women in particular shy away from. But if we looked at the school system early on in elementary school and started to present children with the options, we might see more direction of children tying into the trades and other areas rather than being sort of lost.

If I could add a bit to that, another thing I see really missing, especially at the high school level, is a type of basic life skills training, those skills Mary Jane mentioned: résumé writing, how to approach an employer, how to present yourself, how to appropriately look for a job, how to do some long-range goal setting and life planning; not just, "My focus is getting out of high school and then thinking about what the next step is going to be," but providing the avenue for the kids to focus in on themselves, their goals and what they see themselves doing five years beyond high school.

The Chair: Mr Ramsay, please.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I want to talk a bit about local boards, but I've got to make a comment on the last point you made, because I think that's very important. A lot of the problem I'm finding with our children today in the education system is one of attitude. I think, as parents and as educators, we have to challenge our kids: as you're implying, really turn on our young boys and girls to all the sort of exciting careers that are out there, to inculcate into them, if you will, the idea that skills are important, that skills equal achievement and success and that there's a great world out there. Yes, there are lots of challenges, but if you have the skills, there's going to be a tremendous opportunity out there. I think you're right.

When I was first named as Skills Development critic for our caucus, Brantford was the first place I went to, and I met with all the folks out there who had really started the community economic development committees and the various community training organizations. The first they told me, when they looked at the imposition of the local LTAB for that area, was how it would not work.

You bring a very good point here, and I like your term "natural partnership." That's where I first learned that, that there had to be, as you say, a natural partnership or a community of interest to make it work. If somebody from the federal or provincial government is going to dictate to you that this is your group, it's not going to work. Even though it's different governments involved, we've got to get some direction in the legislation that will allow you to form that as the community sees fit.

I'm not quite sure how to do that yet, but I take your point and we're going to do it. I think it's very important. I've heard down there how if you're with Hamilton, you could certainly be dominated by the needs of Hamilton and by those particular interests and industries, which have to be served, but they shouldn't dominate your needs. I just want to tell you, I'm on your side for that and we're going to try to do something in the legislation.

Ms Orme: Good. Thank you.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I was listening intently not only to the presentation but also to the responses to questions. I think so many people would agree that that is exactly the direction that should be followed.

Where can you point to in the legislation and say, "This is where we fit; this is where we can carry forward some of our experiences in training and adjustment"? Or is there something that should be done to the legislation to make certain that some of your thoughts and experience in this matter should be found within the legislation to ensure that you're able to continue on the work?

Ms Wratten: The boundary issue naturally is going to come up and will be legislated. As well as that, the gender parity is going to be an issue and the ethnic issue will come up. We want to be sure that when this all happens, we don't have breaks in our training, that we aren't going to have spots where things are falling through the cracks. We're hoping that when the legislation comes it's going to be an easy transition from one system to another and that our people don't suffer in the process.

Mr Offer: On the issue of the cracks and things of that nature, are there particular programs you will make use of more than others or particular ministries you will be involved in more than others? If so, could you possibly share some of that with us?

Ms Orme: Primarily, if you're looking at direct purchase, you look at your CITCs, which get funding through Employment and Immigration to do direct purchase. They primarily have been looking at purchasing of seats that are related to trades and to manufacturing, and they don't meet a lot of employment equity targets.

Where we're concerned about the falling through the cracks is that, as we understand the process, if for instance there is only one individual in a group of 20 who is a woman, that one voice could be "the voice crying in the wilderness" as far as making a plea to have women actively involved in the training process is concerned. In Haldimand-Norfolk—I guess the further you get away from urban settings, the harder it is for people in rural settings to relate to the urban environment and for women to access programs.

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If you look at a male-dominated group—the CITCs, for instance, for now tend to focus primarily on trades. I'm not faulting them for that; it's an important avenue, but that avenue could be redirected to include equity target groups as well.

This is why we make a strong case or are trying to make a strong case for equal representation on these boards, so that if you're looking at a business panel made up of four people, at least two of those are women. You might have one native person, you might have a person of colour, but it's representative of the community, as opposed to what is seen in some cases as being strictly an extension of the old boy network where the programs we've got now are continued on without any outreach to include equity targets.

The Chair: Thank you to the Women's Access to Training Coalition from Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk, Ms

Wratten and Ms Orme, for your assistance this morning. You've played an important role in this committee's process. The committee is grateful to you and others like you who take the time to travel here and share your views with us.

We trust you'll be following this legislation as it goes through committee. In the month of February, it'll be receiving clause-by-clause consideration here at Queen's Park. I hope you'll keep in touch if you have any further comments that you wish to make. Thank you kindly. Have a safe trip back home.

WOODGREEN COMMUNITY CENTRE

The Chair: The next participant is Woodgreen Community Centre, if those people would please come forward, have a seat, tell us who they are, their names, their titles or positions, and proceed with their comments. We've got your written submissions which will become a part of the record by virtue of being filed as an exhibit. Please try to save the last 15 minutes of your half-hour for exchanges and dialogue with members of the committee. Go ahead, people. Thank you.

Ms Julia Tao: My name is Julia Tao. I'm representing Woodgreen. With me is Mr Kwok-Keung Fung.

Woodgreen Community Centre is a multiservice agency committed to a comprehensive community approach to enhance the quality of life and self-determination for people in east Toronto. Our services are very diversified. We provide four day care centres, seniors services, services for developmentally handicapped, mental health program, immigrant services. We have over 38 English-as-a-second-language classes and a skills training program. Last but not least, we also run youth employment services, and recently Jobs Ontario has added to our centre's service.

We believe that the establishment of OTAB is the right direction and will have an impact on the development and coordination of all training programs in Ontario. As a community-based training agency, we support OTAB's concept and we support that direction. However, we have several concerns regarding the structure and the principles inherent in OTAB.

The first point I'd like to make is regarding youth participation in OTAB's structure. As you are aware, the youth unemployment rate is two times higher than the usual rate. Their participation in the labour market at this point is the lowest, reflecting all the different barriers they are facing and the limited resources. We provide at Woodgreen a youth employment counselling service and Futures program, funded by the Ministry of Education, and we have found that of the youth we serve—15 to 25, sometimes up to 29-year-olds—they are people who are early dropouts, people who have faced different barriers such as housing, access to services, may have mental health issues, finance, as well as their family—you know, different kinds of problems.

We find that if equity is inherent in the principle of OTAB, then youth representation must be included in the formal structure of OTAB. At this point, youth is not even one of the equity groups.

The second point is relating to partnership. Since OTAB was introduced to the public, the term "partnership" has become synonymous with success, and there is no doubt that all the experiences and resource skills of different partners—business, labour, community organizations, educational institutions—are the keys to rendering OTAB a workable model to bring Ontario back to prosperity. It is exactly with this belief that we now raise our concerns.

Partnership is structure as well as process. A healthy structure is a prerequisite for the process to be efficient and productive. We feel strongly that the present representational criteria on the governing body, councils and local boards are inequitable. These are the concerns raised by many community-based organizations, many coalition bodies such as OYECC, the Ontario youth employment counselling centre, OCASI, the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, and ORMOC, the Ontario Racial Minorities Organizing Committee for Training.

The formula 8-8-4-2 or, say, the 8-8-1-1-1-1-2 formula that dominates much of OTAB's structure is skewed. Equity groups have been trying in the past to raise these concerns, but without success. The designation of one seat for racial minorities and no youth representation fails to recognize the diversity within the Ontario community.

We have heard that in British Columbia the government has increased the representation of equity groups, and we believe the Ontario government should also adopt the same approach, an approach relating to anti-racism, the approach that the Ontario government has adopted relating to multicultural strategy to eliminate barriers within the OTAB structure and the process. This process will ensure true partnership by bringing all the partnership together, all the key stakeholders together in labour force development.

The third point I'd like to raise is regarding representation of educators and trainers. There are two seats in the OTAB structure. However, community-based trainers are not specifically designated as one seat or one of the seats. It's not very clear where they fit.

Community-based training has played in the past a very important role in providing skills training programs, particularly to many people who are new immigrants, newcomers, youth, you know, through storefront offices, through community-based organization settings. They provide a battery of services, such as language training, technical training, counselling and orientation, to meet the different needs of these people, these communities. In fact, a sizeable percentage of the training accessed by racial minorities, accessed by youth, is delivered by community-based training agencies. OTAB must support the continuation of effective community-based training and ensure its role within the structure of OTAB.

I'd like also to recommend here, on behalf of Woodgreen, that the representation of the educator and trainer, that seat—that two seats should include community-based trainers.

The fourth point I'd like to make is regarding the decision-making process. The underlying principle for setting up a structure is that nobody is sensitive enough to see and address all the training issues from a global point of view and a holistic point of view. With this assumption, together

with the preference towards business and labour in OTAB structure, we are extremely worried about the effective participation of equity groups.

Without assurance from the government, how equity groups can function in OTAB becomes our foremost concern, because in the structure they will be faced with a majority of business and organized labour and we are worried how their voice could be heard. Would they be ignored, you know, if the decision-making process is made on a voting structure, or is there a consensus model? It's not very clear in the act. We'd like to have a mechanism built in to empower the participation of the equity groups so that they are not token participation.

As members of equity groups also tend to be less organized, we feel that more resources and more support are needed to ensure their full participation in OTAB. We therefore also recommend, as an equity measure, that more resources be channelled to these groups so that they would participate more fully.

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Another point I'd like to make is regarding the approach to training. One question that is commonly asked is, "Are there jobs after training?" There are a lot of skills training programs here and there in different community centres, in George Brown College as well as in different educational institutions, but it seems there are people who have drifted from training to training. After training they can't find a job and go to another training. Would they benefit from this training?

Much of the current training is very limited in scope, with no long-term strategies. Some may have jumped on to the bandwagon of high-tech training to the extent that other potentials are left untapped.

Training must, we all agree, closely tie in with the economic development of the province. OTAB must link itself to—assuming that it does not have the resources to do its own research—research bodies on economic development and job trends. It must vigorously use information as well as consultation with the community, with the different communities within Ontario in formulating strategies and program plans.

It is well documented that the service industry will dominate the labour force in the decade to come. Overall assessment of the skills needed for the new economy must be done to provide a beacon for future training. Health care, education and other service providers will be desperately needing new skills, and the same for international trade.

We would like to stress that the training should not be just targeted to high-tech but there should be a global view towards different kinds of training to meet our aging population, to meet our diverse population, as well as to be competitive internationally.

The last two points I'd like to make are regarding new Canadians' entry or re-entry to the workforce.

In 1989 the Ontario government produced a report, Access! Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario. This report made over 100 recommendations and none of these or very little have been done. As a result, people with high education and people with skills who are foreign trained remain in menial jobs, remain in unskilled

jobs. In particular, credentials evaluation and the determination of experience are not assessed properly.

We find that since OTAB is going to be structured, we have not heard or we are not very clear on how the implementation of recommendations will be integrated into OTAB or whether OTAB will seriously consider integrating the implementation of recommendations produced by the task force. We'd like OTAB and the Ontario government to address that.

The last point is regarding language training. There are a lot of language classes in Ontario. Some are funded by Canada Employment and Immigration and some are funded by the Ministry of Citizenship, as well as literacy through the Ministry of Education. However, these seem to be very fragmented, they are uncoordinated and there isn't a coordinated policy or strategy between the federal and the provincial governments. This issue has been talked about and discussed for the past 20 years.

We would like to see OTAB take a leadership role in ensuring that there is coordinated intergovernmental policy and strategy development regarding language training.

To summarize the recommendations, we'd like to highlight several:

(1) That the Ontario government reconsider the structure of OTAB, that the governing body, councils and local boards expand the representation of the equity groups.

(2) That the Ontario government ensure that members of the disadvantaged groups are well represented in both the business and labour seats on the governing body, councils and local boards. This I'd like to stress, because there are eight business and eight labour seats. We'd like to make sure that nominations to these seats are not just one group: They should be representative so that there are women sitting in the labour representation, as well as visible minorities and disabled people, so that they do not leave them to just one seat within the OTAB structure. I think some of the staff from OTAB said that this is what they are doing, but we'd like the government to ensure that the principle is inherent in the nomination as well as the structure and the seats in business and labour.

(3) That youth be included in the governing body, councils and local boards as an additional equity group. We want to stress this; it is extremely important. An OYECC deputation has made presentations, and we're very concerned they are outside OTAB.

(4) That OTAB recognize the value and legitimacy of community-based organizations and trainers, and that these trainers be part of the educator representation.

(5) That in the decision-making of OTAB, the mechanism be built in to ensure full participation of equity groups; that's more resources to be built in, more support to be built in.

(6) That OTAB also take a holistic approach to training and that it should explore other areas, other than high-tech, which have potential to absorb a substantial labour force.

(7) Regarding the Access report, OTAB should ensure that there is a follow-up integration of the recommendations.

(8) Regarding language training, OTAB should take a leadership role to ensure an integrated policy.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much for your presentation. It certainly reflects the amount of work you've put into thinking about OTAB and working with the various committees.

As you have spent a lot of time on this issue, you'll be aware that the purpose of our labour force development policies are to support both the economic and social goals of the province. You certainly highlighted the social goals. I'd particularly like to look at the decision-making process because, as you've mentioned, that's a very important element. As you know, right now discussions are under way with the partners in the OTAB project to find an equitable and effective way of reaching decisions. Consensus would be the best way where the agreement exists, and we expect there will be a lot of agreement because there is a lot of support for finding better training processes and the belief that training has to be done better in our province. That alone should guarantee a great amount of agreement. But where it doesn't exist, of course, we have to find some way of resolving the differences.

In your submission, under the decision-making process section, you ask, "Faced with the overwhelming majority of business and organized labour, will their"—meaning the equity groups—"voice be ignored?" Does that mean you think that labour and business will be voting together on a lot of issues, or how do you see the interaction between labour and business on the governing body?

Ms Tao: Certainly the principles of OTAB include equity accountability, and that's why the four equity groups are included, so their needs will be reflected in the OTAB structure. But all through the process we have expressed concern with the formula, that there is heavier weighting of business and labour. For example, within the labour area we find that a lot of new immigrants, racial minorities, are within non-organized labour, non-unionized people. Many of their needs are not reflected within the labour movement or may not be reflected in the business sector: specific needs such as access to information, access to credential evaluation, access to recognition of foreign training.

These are the things that community-based training has been pushing in the past. Racial minorities and youth, who are mostly non-unionized people, have very little access to the traditional educational institutions, traditional workforce training. For example, in many labour-organized workforces there is training in the workplace: apprenticeship training, which helps in the ongoing improvement of their skills within the workforce. But we're seeing people who are left out, who have been in the manufacturing industry, the garment industry, for 20 years, and now they're laid off. They don't have any access to training at all, they don't have any language ability to know where to go.

We are specifically concerned that these things should be reflected. We certainly hope that business and labour support that. However, it's not just a homogeneous group coming out of a particular sector of business, and we want to be sure that diversity is happening, not just in the equity groups but within labour and business.

Mr Kwok-Keung Fung: I want to add that apart from the issue of facing a majority from the other partner, there's

also group dynamics: You are the only person representing a group and you have nobody to share with you, nobody for support, and when you're faced with an issue, you have nobody to discuss it with, and I think that tends to intimidate the representative in that particular body.

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Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly, although you know that the guidelines for nominating are to take into account the diverse nature of Ontario's population. Certainly, the final appointments would be made by the government. So there are those two checks on the homogeneous nature you mentioned. I know you said you hope that will happen, and I can understand your concern to make sure it does. I think there are members of both communities who do reflect the makeup of Ontario's population, so I would say it certainly is feasible for that to happen.

Apart from the isolation, what about the reference group as a way of broadening the representation, not only within the equity groups but also within business and labour? I think you would agree that business and labour are certainly aware of the need for social goals to be supported as well. What about the reference group?

Ms Tao: I think the reference group will be very useful as a sounding board for the needs of the diverse community. In consultation with staff in OTAB, hopefully the reference group will include a very diverse kind of representation. I certainly want to make sure that the principle inherent in it as well is not just colour, that the person chosen is understanding of the needs of the equity groups, the sensitivity, the awareness of the barriers faced by equity groups. These are the kinds of criteria we want to make sure you have included in the choice of the people sitting, whether it's the business, labour or equity groups. The thing is not to look at just colour.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right. The awareness, the knowledge, has to be there as well as the voice. You want to make sure is articulated in the governing board. Do you not think the kind of structure that is set in place here will allow for more discussion and therefore more awareness, and then acting on the issues that perhaps haven't been as effectively dealt with under the disparate or more disorganized approach we have now?

Ms Tao: Yes.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to thank you very much for your presentation. In your summary of recommendations, you express concerns that will be reflected in amendments that I will be putting forward, because I think you're right that the government has to reconsider much of this legislation.

There are just a couple of points I would like to talk about a little bit. Your point 1, asking the government to reconsider the structure, I think is correct. By reconsidering the structure one might be able to help correct the lack of representation of equity groups. I'm primarily focusing right now on the local boards, the so-called LTABs. What's going to be very important is to allow the flexibility for each community to form its own organization, and in so doing, they should reflect the people from that community.

In Toronto, the problem is that we're going to try to form an LTAB about two million people. Just picking

one out of the air, if you allow Scarborough, which is a fairly big community, to form its own LTAB, by doing that, you would more than likely get a good reflection of the people who live there, besides all the players in the training business.

I think that is one way to correct, without specifying that we want another or a third equity group representative. If we make sure the LTABs can develop in a natural community sense and a community of interests comes together, it might correct that without imposing it on the people of Belleville—we've got people from Belleville coming up next—or northern Ontario. I think it would give flexibility to our regions and communities. That may be the way to do it.

One other thing too that might help and that I'm very concerned about—I think you're right—is the decision-making mechanism. You've made that point in point 5. One method to adopt which might help would be to have some sort of double or triple majority setup, so that the equity groups plus the educators, for instance, have to be together in a majority situation in order to have something approved: A majority of the worker reps, a majority of the business people and a majority of that third group all have to agree; each group has to have majorities.

That may be something to look at, but I want to be careful, because I sure want this to be client-driven and I don't want to take away a lot of the clout from the business community or the worker community, as it's been designed to address their concerns. But you're right, something has to be done.

Ms Tao: I think it needs to be quite clear. It's a concern of a lot of equity groups: Why are they there if a decision is going to be based on a majority? That needs to be looked at more carefully when OTAB is established.

I certainly agree with you that the local boards should be flexible and perhaps based on the complexity of the community, the needs of the community. Communities outside Metro Toronto are very different from Metro Toronto, and Scarborough is very different from downtown or Sudbury. In Hamilton, industrial development is also very different from some of the other cities. That needs to be looked at by empowering communities to form the local boards in a flexible way.

That's the area we're not very clear about: What will be the development of the local boards and how much power will they have in determining the future of economic development? There needs to be more consultation with community organizations, educational institutions, business and labour.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you for appearing today and for your very thoughtful brief. I wanted to follow up on my colleague's observations. You should know that one of the downsides of the public consultation was that it appeared the makeup of the OTAB board was not up for discussion. Therefore, we didn't get the same kind of free public participation we needed.

As you know, the focus was on the local boards. I've now learned from the federal government that it has always been its intent that that be a very flexible body, just as my colleague has described. Quoting them, they're saying that

they are not wed to the formula, which means the numbers can change from community to community: business, labour, equity groups, whatever.

That is the principle behind what we're working on. Certainly Ontario would buy into that. I see us as being fairly successful at the local board level. I'm not sure of the flexibility on OTAB itself.

I was interested to see that you had recommended that youth be part of the governing body. You're not alone. It was stated in almost all communities. We'll see what happens in that regard.

On community-based trainers, you should know that later on today there are a couple of people who will be presenting saying that education is underrepresented, that when you've got five groups—colleges, universities, school boards, public trainers and private trainers—you should have five seats. So you'll hear that. Certainly that's going to be one of our recommendations and amendments.

I think my colleague has already explained the decision-making mechanism you talked about.

I was particularly happy that you mentioned the Access report, because quite frankly, I'd forgotten to revisit it, so I will. I thank you for that.

I would ask you if you would consider a different recommendation 9, if you'll look at it. I feel strongly about this. I hope you feel the same way, but feel free to give us advice now. I'm saying "in cooperation with the Minister of Education" because of all the language programs that are offered in school boards and have been so successful and efficient. I wondered if you would entertain that OTAB, in cooperation with the Minister of Education, assume a leadership role.

Ms Tao: Yes, I certainly agree with that. The Ministry of Education also assumes a very important role in literacy and numeracy as well as language training, and many of the very successful programs are run through school boards. In fact, the Ministry of Education would not be under OTAB, so these will be the two bodies that need to be working together. Yes, I agree.

Mrs Cunningham: I would just say to the Woodgreen Community Centre that it's very fortunate to have such leadership in its centre and I thank both of you very much for being here today.

The Chair: On behalf of the committee, I want to express the committee's gratitude to you and the Woodgreen Community Centre for your interest and for your participation here this morning. You've provided some unique insights and we are grateful to you for coming forward. I trust you will keep in touch. Take care, people.

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BELLEVILLE AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chair: The next participant is the Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce, if these people would please come forward, have a seat, tell us who they are, what titles or positions they have and proceed with their comments, trying to save at least 15 minutes for questions and dialogue.

Mr Douglas C. Law: Good morning. I'm Doug Law, president of the Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce. To my left here is Ron Broadbridge, our manager.

The Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce has been the representative voice of business in Belleville since 1864. Currently, membership numbers over 500 companies in all categories: large, small, manufacturing, retail, professional, financial. Our statement of object is "to represent business and its concerns relative to the promotion and development of trade and commerce in Belleville and district."

On behalf of the members of the Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this hearing to present some of our views on Bill 96. It is important that the committee receive input from areas like ours, where restructuring and plant closures have created a genuine need for adjustment and training. It is important too that the committee understand that there is a keen interest in the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board in Ontario, in our community and among our members.

In April 1992 we were pleased to make a presentation to the consultation meeting in Belleville on local boards. This was a very brief presentation due to time constraints and the fact that the focus was on the local board aspect of OTAB. There has been much progress since then, but there are still some issues raised in our local presentation that need to be further explored here today. There are also specific concerns with the wording of certain articles in Bill 96 which we wish to air at this hearing.

The chamber consistently supports initiatives which seek to eliminate duplication for measures that are more efficient and cost-saving. On that basis alone, we view OTAB as an important and positive initiative. From an overall perspective, we support the aims of streamlining the delivery of training in Ontario, the fostering of cooperation among the labour market partners and the promotion of a lifelong learning attitude in our society.

OTAB represents a unique approach to meeting the needs of tomorrow by harmonizing the programs of the federal and provincial governments in the fields of training and involving the labour market partners in deciding on the province's labour force development policies. The potential exists to greatly improve the system by eliminating overlaps and gaps in training programs and by better determining what skills need to be taught.

Bill 96 is indeed "an important milestone," as Richard Allen, the Minister of Skills Development, has stated. Our input is offered in an attempt to ensure that OTAB goes forward with the ability to succeed. It is too important to the future of business in Ontario to be allowed to fail.

The objectives outlined in section 4 of Bill 96 encompass every hope Ontarians could have, from equal access to training to full employment to improvement in everyone's life. It is advisable, however, to recognize that not everyone can or will be trained, that a better life does not necessarily follow job training and that not everyone will be suitably employed. While objectives should be set high, lofty goals as outlined can lead to money being spent needlessly addressing the impossible and trying to meet unachievable goals.

The object expressed by paragraph 4(1)13, "that labour force development programs and services are of high quality and achieve the best results and the best returns on investment," is achievable. OTAB should avoid the pitfalls of trying to be all things to all people and focus on using training dollars wisely.

If OTAB is to successfully improve labour force development programs and services, it will need to access the best training available. While the purchase of training may ultimately be a local decision, the provincial board will dictate certain parameters. Paragraph 4(1)16 indicates a stated preference for publicly funded education systems, possibly contradicting paragraph 4(1)15, which calls for "effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources."

Canada's first private business college was established in Belleville, Ontario, in 1868. Currently, there are almost 300 privately run career colleges in Ontario, which last year trained over 37,000 students. They teach marketable skills and are highly rated in quality by employers. In the purchase of training under OTAB, it would be irresponsible to arbitrarily ignore these colleges.

Belleville is home to both private career colleges and a fine community college, and they strive to meet the needs of job entry, re-entry and adjustment students. They both have a significant role to play in the future of labour force development in Ontario. A clear statement is needed on a policy to purchase the best training available, utilizing both publicly funded and privately owned institutions.

Under section 30, dealing with regulations, the method of decision-making has been left open, with the option of the Lieutenant Governor in Council to prescribe a process. Ideally, the board will arrive at a consensus on matters before it, but realistically, this will not always be the case. A decision-making procedure must be in place, and recognizing the makeup of the board and the co-chairs, there is only one logical method.

A majority of both the business and the labour representatives and, of course, an overall majority should be required for all decisions. Such a procedure would prevent any special interest group from hijacking the board, and it would eliminate the possibility of pressure being brought to bear on the groups with smaller representation on OTAB.

Without this procedure in place, the potential for OTAB to fail increases, as the concept of consensus may quickly disappear. Either the labour delegation or the business delegation would be able to introduce its own agenda, pressing the other board members to choose sides. The double majority decision-making procedure brings all delegates to the table to develop programs and services into which everyone can readily buy.

While Bill 96 establishes OTAB as a crown agency, it must operate "within a framework that is consistent with the economic and social policies, including labour market policies, of the government of Ontario," as stated in clause 1(d). Further, the Minister of Skills Development, Richard Allen, states that, "A highly skilled labour force will attract investment, drive economic renewal and create jobs in Ontario."

We have no quarrel with the minister's belief that the economy is people-driven and that a skilled workforce is crucial to economic growth. However, the policy direction ignores the role of wealth creation in a free enterprise economy. Private sector development creates jobs, and such development requires investment. Jobs are created by providing an environment that is conducive to growth and attractive to investors.

If OTAB is to "follow the broad policy direction of the provincial government," there is reason to question if real job creation is attainable. Over the past two years, concerns expressed by the business community have been largely ignored, even though valid concerns about loss of investment and job loss were raised. A different agenda, mostly drafted by organized labour, was followed in the passing of the Ontario Labour Relations Act amendments. If the "policy direction" for OTAB is to again adopt an organized labour agenda, then the initiative is doomed. There will be no consensus.

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The concept of OTAB is to take a bold new approach to the whole area of labour force development programs by empowering the board to make changes for the future. Its actions will be forward-looking and not tied to the government of the day. It is conceivable that, on occasion, the board may find it necessary to oppose existing policies in order to effect change in Ontario's training system. Bill 96 must not hamstring the board with the policy direction of the provincial government, but rather grant it the freedom and flexibility it will need to do the job.

The potential for developing a giant bureaucracy exists with the establishment of OTAB, due to its wide range of responsibility and the complex nature of the organization. Every effort should be made to prevent valuable training and adjustment dollars from being gobbled up by administrative costs.

Estimates from \$400 million to \$1.6 billion have been presented as the annual funding under the control of OTAB. Taking advantage of existing programs with volunteer contributions such as CITCs are steps that must be encouraged. The addition of more staff at the expense of the taxpayer is not an option. OTAB must not be used as an excuse to add to the bureaucracy or to impose new taxes just because it is a new program.

OTAB will have responsibility for four areas of labour force development and it is depending on the board to effectively direct activities in these different areas. The establishment of subcommittees for each of the four areas—workplace and sectoral training, apprenticeship programs, adjustment, and entry/re-entry programs—would allow a more focused approach to each.

Dividing the workplace in this manner will help bring more complete information to the table and allow the board to make better-informed decisions on the specific areas of labour force development.

The Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce views the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board as an innovative undertaking with the potential to bring high levels of effectiveness, efficiency and cooperation to the labour force development in this province. As the representative

voice of business in our area, we will continue to work towards its successful establishment and operation.

In summary, we offer the following recommendations:

(1) Re-examine the objectives as outlined in article 4 to avoid establishing unrealistic goals which may lead to unproductive programs. It is important to avoid launching OTAB with all-encompassing objectives that are too broad to be meaningful.

(2) Make a clear statement of policy on the purchase of training that includes both private and publicly funded educational institutions. The emphasis must be on the best training available.

(3) Establish a decision-making procedure that requires a double majority of business and labour representatives and an overall majority.

(4) Make full use of the existing personnel and volunteer structure to avoid increasing the bureaucracy.

(5) Utilize the subcommittees to address the specific areas of labour force development in order to get the best focus on each area.

(6) Do not restrict OTAB to following the policy directions of the provincial government, but grant it the independence to determine what the marketplace needs and then to develop the programs needed.

These recommendations are respectfully submitted on behalf of the members of the Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce and in support of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

Mr Ramsay: Gentlemen, thank you very much for your presentation today. I find it most helpful as a member of the Legislature. In opposition, we certainly want to put forward recommendations to try to make the legislation better, and I think you've highlighted some main points that have been addressed by others and that we share. I just want to tell you that I will be putting forward amendments that reflect most of your suggestions. I think we've repeatedly heard that these things have to be corrected. Really, you're right.

I'm very concerned about the whole legislation. It is so wishy-washy in its goals and objectives because it's the very first intent to try to create an organization that would produce highly skilled and productive workers in the province, and therefore people who will achieve and be successful. It's now making sure that we're going to boost the public school system and it's got all sorts of other subgoals into it that are all worthwhile but that dilute the overall intent of what OTAB's about.

I think we've got to create some sharper focus for it. I think you've been very helpful in that and I'll certainly take your ideas into consideration when I move amendments to this legislation.

The Chair: Mr Offer.

Mrs Cunningham: How much time do I have, Mr Kormos?

The Chair: You have lots of time, but Mr Offer's got—

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, I'm sorry.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I won't take too long, but on page 5 you have indicated that the bill

"must not hamstring the board with the policy direction of the provincial government, but rather grant it the freedom and flexibility it will need to do the job." I would like to ask you the question as to accountability and some degree of responsibility any government should have with respect to training and adjustment in the province.

Mr Law: I think in general our concerns are that as governments change over a period of time—we're looking at a major body that's going to carry on for a number of years as a crown agency—and as government policies change, you can get to a point in time where, if there's a change in government in another couple of years, they all of a sudden swing the direction. We think that OTAB, as it's tying together both the various ministries that are a function of the government and are supported by that and also the federal government and its ministries, should be able to stand aside and not necessarily follow specifically the current government's policies. Obviously, there has to be some minor control mechanism—they can't go off in every direction—but I think there's sufficient control with the individual ministries that they would be liaising with too right now.

Mr Offer: Thank you. I think others have come forward and shared concerns about there not being that degree of accountability or connection between the board and the government, but I do recognize your concern that there has to be a continuing consistency with the direction of OTAB, notwithstanding any change of government.

I would like to ask you the question as to funding. Who, in your opinion, should pay for the training and adjustment, meeting the needs of the province in the future?

Mr Law: I guess it's a combination. The funds will be allotted through the various ministries. I know there's specifically the issue of a business tax for training. If the controls are in place, probably a business tax could be acceptable, providing, once again, that we're not looking at a situation where one group or the other maintains the control. That's where we have to have consensus specifically from all parties. It may be a little more palatable at that stage if you're looking at a specific tax for training.

Mr Ron Broadbridge: If I might add, too, a tax on business doesn't appear entirely fair in that we must recognize that some businesses are contributing a fair bit of money to training and are doing excellent training within their own companies, more and more, and also that there are other bodies, other parties, that should also be contributing to training; namely, organized labour, which has a big say in what's being done with those training dollars. To take all the money from business, which can ill afford it in these economic times, and to not look at the other sources of funding wouldn't be quite right either.

Mrs Cunningham: I think it's interesting to note that we've had representatives before the committee of organized labour who have told us about their own training fund, and we've also had the business community which has told us how it has invested training dollars. But I think the principle behind this legislation is that we get both groups working together with all the other partners. To put a tax on it at this point in time, before we get started or

even talk about it, is detrimental to the working of the whole thing. I mean, who wants to work with the government if you're going to have to pay a tax anyway? Just throw it out as far as, I think, most people are concerned.

I was interested in a number of your observations. With regard to paragraph 4(1)13, you've asked us to take a look at 4 and make sure that all of the objects are responsible and that the objectives can be met. When you talked about 13, that was one that you were complimentary about, because you said that the goal there was attainable. I think I'm correct on that. Are you then asking that we look at all the others? "Achievable" was the word. I think you're right. I hadn't thought of it that way, but a lot of it is a bunch of rhetoric and it doesn't really mean very much. Maybe we should look at it again and see that everything can have a final conclusion with some kind of goal.

Mr Law: Specifically, if you get into paragraph 4(1)5, it's very all-encompassing and heads all over the place and really doesn't tie things in. If you also look into probably 4(1)12, it's the same sort of thing. Given the fact that 4(1)13 and the goals that are outlined there are specific in that they are monitored and cost-effective, the other doesn't have to be restated or quoted.

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Mrs Cunningham: You're not alone in your observations with regard to 15 and 16. They're not compatible. And the recognition of the private trainers is not in the act. We'll be putting forth those appropriate amendments.

On to the next part: The double majority has been mentioned by many groups. In fact, I asked the minister about it on day one and he said they were actually looking at that kind of solution to the problem. I think those were his words: He was looking for a solution. So we've had some suggestions.

Your policy direction on page 4—I really did get a kick out of this, to put it bluntly. When I first saw this, I thought, oh, my gosh. Another WCB, another Ontario Hydro, the whole bit. And then I thought about certain governments and I thought, gee, they need to be separate because we want the training objectives of the local communities to be met, not the policy of the government. So that is the only place—and I'm glad you put it in writing—where I could justify this board. And I'm not even sure I can. But you did make a good point, and I want to congratulate you heartily.

On page 5 you talk about cost control and the bureaucracy. I've mentioned that we agree with you there, and I've asked you a question with regard to the achievability of 4(1)13. I guess right now I'd like to ask you a more global question with regard to Belleville. Do you have a local training board there, and has it been successful in your work with your community college?

Mr Broadbridge: We do have a CITC that has been quite successful. It's called Skills Quinte; they chose not to stay with the regular name. We also have a steering group that's working towards the formation of an LTAB.

Mrs Cunningham: Since we're moving along in the presentations, sometimes I find myself giving people advice, and I know that's not appropriate, but I did want you to

know that we've had a lot of concern about the local hearings. You talked about local board hearings, when the rest of us all thought it would be on the OTAB body itself, but the emphasis was on local boards.

Mr Broadbridge: Yes.

Mrs Cunningham: We now find out that the local boards, as far as at least the federal government is concerned—and I'm hoping that the provincial government and this bill will have the basic principles in there. They are looking that they're not wed to any formula—otherwise, it's up to you, so I'm giving you this advice—that they will have local control over many of the dollars, especially those related to the CLFDB, that it should be a bottom-fed, grass-roots board and membership should be appointed locally, and that other training boards, ie the ones in place, should be brought in and used where they have been efficient. So those are the principles that we got from the federal government, Employment and Immigration, yesterday. I thought you might like to know that and wondered if you had any response to it at all.

Mr Broadbridge: Those were many of the points that were made at our local consultation. Obviously the difficulties in being bottom-fed or from the grass roots are that the areas of necessity are quite large and are not necessarily homogeneous or something that we can deal with readily. We're dealing with new territory here, and I'm not exactly sure what the boundaries are, but they do go quite a bit to the north of our city. They take in some interesting problems in training. We get into a resource-based area as opposed to manufacturing. A number of factors come into play. So it will be difficult, but we have discussed the makeup of the board and certainly how we would deal with it from a business side. I think we have the ability to move ahead when necessary to do that, and to put together an effective board.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you for a very thorough presentation and for your positive outlook. I too have that as long as we move appropriately and make sure the structure is in place that we can all buy into. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you, Mr Kormos, and welcome to Queen's Park, neighbour. You make a very strong presentation for eastern Ontario, and I'm really pleased to hear that.

Mrs Cunningham: Is this your riding?

The Chair: They're neighbours.

Mr Gary Wilson: Not yet.

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, this will be interesting. Let's hear your questions, Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, I'd like to begin—
Interjection.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, that's right. Thanks, Sharon.

Since Mrs Cunningham is making her presence known here, I will pick up on something she said, which was that your presentation, like so many, has caused us to look at this in new ways, which I think is the value of committee

hearings. You look at the legislation again just to think of why it's there and think of the reasons for it.

She called section 4, for the most part, a bunch of rhetoric. I don't think you're going quite that far, although you do—

Mrs Cunningham: I didn't say they did.

Mr Gary Wilson: No, you said you did.

Mrs Cunningham: You bet.

Mr Gary Wilson: I said I don't think they are.

Mrs Cunningham: And I'll look at it carefully and let you know where the rhetoric is.

Mr Broadbridge: We called it "lofty."

Mr Gary Wilson: Lofty. I like that.

Mrs Cunningham: And I say rhetoric. What's the difference?

Mr Gary Wilson: In fact, as you know, probably, from the process, this is deeply rooted. It wasn't just dreamed up in some office, but it comes from the consultation among the labour market partners over a number of years. This is something they've all agreed to, or at least it has come up in discussion—

Mrs Cunningham: What a fib. That's why they're here.

Mr Gary Wilson: The other thing is, when you look at the one you've singled out, as far as what should be done, that is among them, of course. But to single out two, the educational ones, that in fact they are complementary, numbers 15 and 16—they certainly do mention all the various educational institutions in the community as well as mentioning the importance of the public institutions. In Kingston I'm constantly meeting graduates of Loyalist, and I feel a bit badly for your area that you lose them, but I'll bet it goes the other way as well. I know the full range of training exists there as well.

What's driving this is the need to get better training in Ontario, and this is well recognized. This limits it, too; I think this will provide the focus. You think that maybe too much is introduced in the legislation. I think you, to be fair, introduce something that's not exactly germane in your discussion of other legislation. In fact, this legislation, as I say, is focused on the need for the labour market partners to come up with training that meets their needs, and it's a shared responsibility between government and them. There are accountability principles built into this to make sure both sides, the labour market partners and government, meet their responsibilities.

Taking it in that perspective, it is a focused piece of legislation that will meet that need in an accountable way. As I say—

The Chair: Do you want to adopt everything Mr Wilson has said, or do you want to respond to it?

Mr Law: I think our concern about lofty goals—there's practicality that has to be drawn to here. It's a matter of turning around and taking people and saying—by example, if somebody's on UI right at the moment they should be able to have some form of training or something like that to assist them to carry on. But when the word is they've got to be literate in computers and they're possibly

living in our area and you have 50 people becoming very literate in computers and there are no jobs from there after, you get very disgruntled people after a while. I think if we watch the news reports we see that all the time: "I've trained, retrained and retrained and there are still no jobs."

So once again, when you're dealing with the lofty goals of this board, you turn around and almost make it that, "Okay, we're going to be able to solve all these problems," and that's not the case. Reality is, you've got to focus in and be specific to your training focus to the needs, tie it with labour, tie it with the business group and, at that stage of the game, be more focused on the areas.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, as you point out, training by itself can't achieve everything, I think we all agree to that. Again, it's just to make sure the money we spend on training—and by the way, it's only \$400 million to \$500 million; there is no suggestion of a business tax at this point. I'm pleased to hear, though, that you are open to other ways, which is one of the things we expect will come out of the deliberation of OTAB and the community boards: other ways of finding the money.

It's well known that only a limited number of private companies right now are spending on training, and that doesn't cover their whole workforce. Often it's just managers and executives who are covered, not front-line workers. These are some of the things that can be addressed, and the problems—

Mr Law: I would probably disagree with that. I think any company that's of any size at all has various training programs right from lines straight through, because—

Mr Gary Wilson: Excuse me. I have this from Allan Taylor, the Royal Bank chairperson, and he says, "At present, only a third of Canadian companies provide any formal training, mostly for upgrading the performance of managers rather than front-line workers." That's from last Thursday.

Mr Bill Murdoch (Grey): Who's going to believe a bank guy?

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Mr Gary Wilson: It's on the record. But anyway, as I say—

Mr Law: On the other side of it, when you're looking at training programs and the way they're working, I think we have to agree that there is a fair amount of training. And don't get the idea that we're proposing a tax for business here; we're definitely not. But if you do turn around and look at the decision-making consensus and everything is working as per our proposal, then those issues are dealt with and funding is dealt with, probably in a very acceptable manner. But nobody here is proposing that we're going for a business tax right at the moment. I'm not suggesting it either.

Mr Broadbridge: And a large part of what we're dealing with with OTAB is adjustment, and adjustment is a two-sided thing. There's adjustment taking place with a lot of smaller companies, and part of that adjustment process is that they're too busy surviving to have the time to do the proper training. That's not something this is going to address. Maybe some help can come through OTAB to make

it possible for these two thirds, which would be mostly the smaller companies, to get some more effective training going on their own.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. I think the kind of structure, the overview, and one of the points is to provide the research that is necessary. One of the points in the objects that—I agree. In this environment it appears lofty, but at the same time, I think it's, as you're saying, fundamental to the future of training.

I was wondering whether I could ask you about the representation of unorganized workers and how that could be addressed.

Mrs Cunningham: I don't believe the question.

Mr Gary Wilson: Sorry, I asked the—

Mrs Cunningham: It's marvellously refreshing.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said, they cause us to look at this in new ways.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): It's a criticism of the WCB and Ontario Hydro.

Mr Broadbridge: We did make the point in our local board consultation that seven eighths of our labour force in the Belleville area are not organized, but I do recognize that there is a decision that has been made to make OTAB on that basis. We're not about to beat our head against the wall on that point. I don't think we'll win it.

Mr Gary Wilson: Not only that, Doug—when I hear "Doug from Belleville," I usually think of Doug Sward. He tells me good things about you people.

Mr Broadbridge: Doug is a good friend of ours and we work well together.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. The president of the Quinte District Labour Council.

Mrs Cunningham: We have Mr Ashton in London and we feel the same way.

Mr Wiseman: Can I get in here or what?

Mr Murdoch: There will be an alternative candidate. They have them in every riding.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, are you finished?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, I'll let my esteemed colleague.

The Chair: We'll accommodate Mr Wiseman.

Mr Wiseman: Thank you. I've been listening now for a couple of days to the presentations on this and the training and adjustment that is going to be necessary in the future. How it is implemented either locally or provincially in terms of these boards is going to hinge on one very fundamental issue, and that is determining what training is appropriate.

Given that the big companies have not guessed right yet and the volatility of the trends, when you look at how we're going to have to equip people of the future, giving them specific training and specific skills may not be as important as giving them the ability to acquire them. When I think in that line, and you nodded in agreement, it seems to me that if you recognize that as a beginning point, then

if labour, management and any groups accept that as the beginning point, you shouldn't have the kind of confrontation or dysfunctioning that you're alluding to or that some people have suggested with double majorities and so on. If we guess wrong, we're really all in this together, aren't we?

Mr Law: I would probably like to agree with you, but the reality is you have a group of eight people on each side of the table coming up with their decisions. I know it's nice to say that we should all probably be studying philosophy, which would allow us then to be able to have a mind that would be open to everything and redirect ourselves. However, I don't think I can talk to a Steelworker and expect him to understand philosophy, so we've got to go back to reality and say—

Mr Wiseman: I'm not sure that's the case. I disagree with you because in Durham, Gary Polonsky, the head of Durham College, held a one-day seminar when this first began to emerge and brought all of the stakeholders together. What you're saying may have been the way everybody came into the room in the morning, but it certainly wasn't the way everybody left in the evening.

Mrs Cunningham: How long ago was that?

Mr Wiseman: That was about a year and a bit ago. There was a facilitator. A lot of the ideas that are in the bill now about equity and about distribution of who's going to be on these committees actually emerged in a consensus way when everybody sat down. There were municipal politicians, there was labour, there was management, there was DRAC, which is the Durham Region Action Committee for Training, and there were community college professors. I went because I wanted to see how this was going to work out, and the dynamic was really quite refreshing. It didn't happen the way the worst-case scenario predicted; it happened exactly the opposite.

Mr Broadbridge: The double majority is not about confrontation; it's simply a procedure. It also addresses the concerns that we've heard here earlier about the groups that don't have the size of representation that business and labour do on the group. Those people could be ganged up on or coerced into taking either the business side or the labour side to push something through.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Broadbridge and Mr Law, for appearing today and speaking on behalf of the Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce. Chambers of commerce from several locations have made some valuable contributions to this process around this particular piece of legislation, and you have added to that in your own right. We're grateful to you for participating, for your interest and for your insights. Of course we trust that you'll be following the bill as it goes through committee and back into the Legislature. We welcome any further comments on your part. We'd ask that you please keep in touch and have a safe trip back home.

We're recessed until 2 o'clock.

The committee recessed at 1217.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 1400.

SCHOOL BOARDS SECTOR WORKING GROUP

The Chair: It's 2 o'clock. We're ready to resume. We're resuming at 2 o'clock because that's when we were scheduled to resume and people are here expecting to be heard at that time.

Our first participant is the School Boards Sector Working Group. Could the spokespersons for that group please come forward. Have a seat and tell us your names and titles, if any. We have your written submission, which will become a part of the record by virtue of being made an exhibit. I want to remind people that there's coffee and other beverages available at the side. Those are not just for committee members, but certainly for members of the public, because, Lord knows, you've already paid for them. I invite you to partake. Please go ahead.

Ms Jane Dobell: I'm delighted to be here, Mr Kormos. We're all delighted at this opportunity. We're hoping that too good a lunch will not keep your colleagues from joining us.

The Chair: Hope springs eternal, ma'am.

Ms Dobell: I recognize that. Perhaps I could then begin by first describing the format, as we would like to agree upon it, and then introducing ourselves and outlining and beginning the presentation.

We think it's important to read into the record, particularly in view of this, our formal concerns, our formal recommendations. As quickly as we can initially, we will do that. The material, I believe, has been distributed or will be distributed. Our brief has these concerns in it.

After we have done that, we will answer questions on our concerns and elaborate, because we think it's most useful to hear what it is you want to know about our position rather than just reiterating it. Then, when the question and answer dialogue has been sufficient, we'll then make some closing remarks, all within our time frame, if that is okay.

The Chair: Thank you kindly. Of course, you have one hour. The reason is because this particular participant is an omnibus group consisting of a number of other organizations, each of which could have laid claim to its own 30 minutes. They were candid with the clerk in identifying themselves, and indeed this is a more efficient approach than it would have been had each appeared on its own. Go ahead.

Ms Dobell: That's correct. Who are we—I think that is the first point—the three presenters here today. I'm Jane Dobell. I'm on this school board sector representing the Ontario Public School Trustees' Association.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: I'm Malcolm Buchanan and I'm here representing the teacher organizations, the Ontario Teachers' Federation in particular.

Mr Gerry Blake: My name's Gerry Blake. I represent the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association and I am representing the administrators within this coalition.

Ms Dobell: We represent not ourselves as individuals but the School Boards Sector Working Group. I'd like perhaps to draw attention initially to the importance of this group and how new and inclusive it is. If you will flip to the inside page of our presentation, you will see the list of people who have reviewed our brief and who are supporting it and whom we represent here today.

To read it into the record: l'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association, the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association, the Association des agentes et des agents de supervision franco-ontariens, the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association, the Ontario Public Supervisory Officials' Association, the Ontario Association of Continuing Education School Board Administrators, the Ontario Council for Adult Educators, the Ontario Cooperative Education Association, the Association des enseignants et des enseignants franco-ontariens, the Ontario Teachers' Federation, the Ontario Public School Teachers' Federation, the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association and the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation.

I guess my point in reading that long list is to say I'm sure you know that the history of school boards and school matters in this province is not one where you would expect to find all these groups coming in and saying the same thing. In fact, as a trustee who's been very much on the management side in the last 20 years, I never thought that Malcolm Buchanan of the OSSSTF would be my best friend and that my home away from home would become Mobile Drive. Certainly, when I go up to Mobile Drive, all his colleagues peek around the door and say, "What are you doing here?"

I think the point I want to make is that we are working together for the first time as a group, a broad-based school coalition which is inclusive. We have been working together for a year now on this matter and we are very pleased with this fact and find it a very important thing for us to have done. It's been very helpful for us. So this unique coalition that we have, over the past year, probably met once a month, and we have found that our first task has been to get recognition of the contribution of school boards to labour development and training, because in the history of the development of OTAB, the school board recognition has not been there. We've been a kind of forgotten player in this game.

There's been an assumption that training for adults, education for adults, was not our business. This can be seen if you look at the first document, the skills development document which described the original plan. School boards were consistently not there. Every time we hit a paragraph, we'd think, "Ah, we will be mentioned here." We were not.

Then we came to the hearings of the panel when they went around the country on the LTABs, the local training and adjustment boards. We as a group, therefore, tried to rectify this. We sent in briefs, we made presentations. I think at every hearing the school boards were there. We

see ourselves as a useful resource for the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board and as a partner in this process, and we think that if we are not, if our role is not recognized and if we are not used as a partner and a resource, really OTAB cannot work, because our role in this, adult training, has been so large in the province. During the question period I have more to say about our role and what in fact we have done.

We are promoting not only provincial coalitions—you see us here today—but local coalitions. The significant thing is that in each case it's management and labour working together, it's separate and public and it's very inclusive. So we think this is a very positive thing.

In our opening statement, we do support in principle the establishment of something like the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board because we recognize the need for Ontario to coordinate its program of education, training and retraining in order to assist the labour force to adjust in a fast-changing economy. We recognize that all of our training and educational resources must be efficiently utilized. So we support it in principle, but we have a number of very serious concerns.

My two colleagues are going to quickly outline, in one case the concerns, and then specific recommendations, after which we'll be open for questions on both the concerns and the recommendations.

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Mr Blake: To reiterate, it's our intention here—and I direct your attention to the executive summary at the beginning of the paper that was distributed to the committee members—to read this into the public record.

The working group coalition has, however, a number of concerns with respect to Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. These concerns include the following:

School boards have not been adequately recognized as key players in current and future labour force development in Ontario.

The legislation has been drafted in isolation from an overall provincial policy on labour force development and lifelong learning.

The legislation does not adequately deal with the issues of accountability and openness.

Funding for the proposed structures is not addressed.

Implementation issues have not been adequately addressed.

Quite frankly, too many details have been left to the regulations, which we have yet to see.

With that in mind, therefore, we would recommend the following:

— That the government develop a coherent policy of lifelong learning which includes both education and training.

— That labour force development programs not be restricted to skills development, but have the dual purpose of enhancing the quality of life and the skills and employability of people.

— That in recognition of the importance of lifelong learning, the Ministry of Education, through its education finance reform process, not place limitations on access to

publicly funded secondary education, and that there not be a rationing of secondary school diploma credits.

— That labour force development be part of a comprehensive economic development strategy.

— That before any programs are transferred to the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, the government, including the Ministry of Education, develop a process to establish and release to the public clearly articulated transfer criteria; document the impact that these transfers will have on existing programs and their delivery; undertake a careful analysis of the current and future funding of existing programs and guarantee that the needs of clients are met during the implementation stage; further develop criteria on which to base decisions for determining which training agencies will receive funding from OTAB and indeed which programs are to be funded; finally, establish an appeals board with regard to decisions on the allocation of funds to various delivery agencies.

I must reiterate that last point: to establish an appeals process with regard to decisions on the allocation of funds to various delivery agencies.

I would now like to call upon my colleague Malcolm Buchanan to finish the recommendations.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: Chairperson and members of the committee, the recommendations that I'll be reading into the record relate more specifically to the proposed legislation known as Bill 96:

— That the legislation be amended to include a mandatory audit and review process, and that a formal evaluation, audit and review of the composition, mandate and funding of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, its councils and local training boards be undertaken within two years of their establishment.

— That the publicly funded school board sector have direct representation on the OTAB governing body, its labour force development councils and all local training and adjustment boards.

— That before any provincial or local training boards are established, the issue of accountability be addressed, and there are three major points: guarantees that there will be public access to all meetings of the OTAB board of governors or directors, reports and decision-making processes at both the provincial and local levels; the mandatory establishment of permanent reference groups to whom the OTAB governors are accountable; and the establishment of an appeals process with regard to funding allocation decisions, which, as you can see, we are emphasizing in our presentation.

— That the mandate and role of training and adjustment boards be clarified in the legislation.

— That an orderly and open process for the establishment of local training and adjustment boards be established which provides for continuity and an evaluation of existing training structures so that we can build upon their successes and ensure that there are not gaps in service to the community.

— That copies of the draft regulations—we emphasize this—be released for comment prior to the passage of Bill 96 and that a number of implementation issues related to the impact of the establishment of OTAB on existing programs

be addressed, which are contained in the body of our submission.

Ms Dobell: Shall we try question and answer now? If the questions and answers perhaps don't elicit some of the points, we may make them upfront, but we'd perhaps—

The Chair: We've got a healthy chunk of time for discussion. Ms Cunningham is going to go first. We've got 45 minutes to be shared equally. I know Mr Ron Hansen, the member for Lincoln, is here. Come up and join your colleagues. This is a democratic committee, Mr Hansen. We're not afraid to include any members of the Legislature for participation and I would welcome you to ask questions of these people and participate in the debate, because I know that you, as Chair of a committee, would do likewise.

Mrs Cunningham: This is a refreshing time in the history of Ontario when we see the Ontario Catholic Supervisory Officers' Association, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, the Ontario Public School Boards' Association and the Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association working on something that I think is so vitally important to Ontario, and that's the training of our young people. I am particularly appreciative that you have worked so hard to put together this brief today, to give us the advice we were waiting for.

I do, however, have some questions. The first one has to do with the whole process to date. The reason I'm asking the question is that the committee is getting different points of view. We're having some people tell us to speed the process up and other people tell us to slow the process down. Which would you pick and perhaps tell us why?

Ms Dobell: I think, Gerry, you were talking about process of transfer and a lot of the things that need to be done first, so perhaps you'd like to—

Mr Blake: I guess, first and foremost, Mr Chair, through you to member Cunningham, our concern is that we have to be recognized as significant players in the adult and continuing education business. In that, we wish to be consulted as significant players in terms of the process, and in that sense we generally feel the legislation does not allow for that in terms of our representation. It does not consult us with respect to the transfer of programs.

I guess what we're really trying to say here is that we want to assist and be collaborators and partners in the process. We really feel we've been undervalued. Our question is not perhaps with the spirit of the legislation, but rather that we have not been consulted and that use has not been made of the expertise we feel we have, and indeed there is our track record with respect to adult programs. In terms of process, I guess that's our strongest plea, that we very much be involved. In that sense, our concerns with respect to the legislation are in that area.

Ms Dobell: I would like to add something to that. If we felt that the legislation gave us the guarantee of consultation, participation and a process where there would be dialogue and accountability, then I think we could get on with it. But when we're faced with proposed legislation where none of that is built in, and where our own role is so undervalued, then we're very apprehensive, because we

feel that if we were frogmarched into this, it would just be destructive of the kinds of programs we've been offering and of the role as we see it. Malcolm, do you want to comment?

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: Very briefly, we support the intent and the spirit of the legislation. We have to get on with the job of the coordination of training and adjustment; there's no question about it. But as was stated at the very beginning, for OTAB to succeed there must be the direct involvement of the school board sector, because we do have the facilities, we do have the expertise and we want to play a significant role. There is an element of, "Let's get on with the job," but at the same time, it's got to be in step with those of us directly involved to make sure we do it right. That's the most important point.

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Mrs Cunningham: There has been some criticism—and I'm going to make three statements now so you can respond—that you haven't been heavily involved in this process and I'm sure you have something to say about that. The position that's been made before the committee is that the hearings were advertised as local board hearings, while you're really talking about having representation on the board itself, the governing body itself, so that may or may not be the reason for the lack of direction towards the governing body placements.

The other consideration the committee has to look at is that there has been a number of presenters who have said there ought to be five seats for education: There ought to be colleges, universities, school boards, private trainers and public trainers. I'd like you to respond to that.

I'm sorry to be so inclusive here, but when you talk about "before any programs are transferred," I think you should advise the committee what programs you're doing now, because I don't think everybody understands the track record you have and the success you've had. In spite of a training structure in the province, the school boards have moved forward.

Ms Dobell: We asked to be handed out a sort of quick and dirty sheet on statistics. One of the reasons it's quick and dirty is that the Ministry of Education's statistics are two years out of date and we haven't been able to get up-to-date statistics. At the top of the page, we're showing that 10% or 11%, say, of the high school population in the daytime are adults. That is the extent in 1990-91.

I did two samples. I looked at Etobicoke and I took that 10% figure and I said, "Okay, Etobicoke, what's up with you this year?" They said: "Well, that figure's out of date. Between January 1992 and January 1993 we had a 35% increase in the number of adults taking daytime credits. So those figures are out to lunch. They don't represent what's happening."

Then they said, "In addition to that, we had a 25% increase in the night-time program." There used to be a lot of kids in that program, but now it's majority adults who are frightened that they're going to lose the job they've got because they haven't got a high school diploma. They're coming back at night so they won't be one of the ones laid off. They said: "We've had to add staff to deal with a 33%

increase in adults requesting their transcript from our dead files because they had a job; they lost it. They had skills. They tried for a year to get work and they could not get work without a high school diploma, so now they're coming back to complete their high school diploma."

The other point was of course English as a second language. In Etobicoke, over three years, they tell me there is a 300% increase in this figure, something like 10,000 registrations in the last year.

In my own board, the Ottawa Board of Education, adults in day school taking credits: 26% increase. That's in spite of the six-week strike, so you've got to be keen to get over that problem. In adult basic education: 20% average annual growth over the last six years. English as a second language: 29% average annual growth. The thing is going through the ceiling. This is what we feel is not recognized by the people who drafted the OTAB legislation, who wrote the original documents.

I would like to know, under freedom of information, Madam Cunningham, who says we haven't been heavily involved, because I'd like to skin them?

Mrs Cunningham: Then I won't name them publicly.

Ms Dobell: Just give me their private telephone numbers. I've spent a great deal of my life, as have these gentlemen and the people behind me, for the past year making presentations in response to the skills document, appearing at every local hearing we could find to appear at, participating in the local board discussion, participating in the steering committee. We must have one-and-a-half meetings a month, endless participation, so I guess I'm pretty upset to hear that.

The last thing, and then I know my colleagues want to comment, yes, we want a seat on the OTAB. We want a seat on the local council, for sure. We want a seat on the actual councils as they are set up and on the task forces as they will be set up. We don't think it will work if we're not there. Our people have to move from our school system into the workforce, so we must be involved in these programs as they evolve. We're not an option because by law they have to come from us into the workforce.

Mr Blake: I would direct committee members, and I won't take the time to read it, to look at the statistics on page 4 of our brief, talking about adults enrolled in continuing education programs. It describes the types of programs we have. I would invite members to note that.

I guess what we're really saying is that one of the notions behind the creation of OTAB is that it be client-driven, that it recognize what the market wants out there. I think the statistics we have in our report, shown on page 4, and indeed the report that Jane just gave, quite clearly indicate that school boards are responding to the clients out there in the programs that are identified on page 4.

It's not to suggest, with respect to the committee, that we're looking to monopolize the field. We're a partner and we feel that we have a very good track record, but we haven't been legitimately recognized in the legislation in terms of our access to decisions that could be made which would have a serious impact on our ability to deliver programs. I think in that respect that's how we come, not so

much to protect turf but rather to work as a collaborative partner.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: Just a further comment. You asked a specific question about the number of educational trainer representatives on OTAB. I really can't speak on behalf of the other communities; they will make their own presentations.

I think for all the reasons my colleagues have given and in the contents of the brief, public school boards are publicly accountable bodies. With the huge network of the high schools and the other infrastructure that publicly funded school boards provide across the province, we believe that the majority of the training must be in those publicly funded institutions because they're publicly accountable. To create another huge bureaucracy of things would cause a problem. That is why one of the major pitches we're making is that there must be school board representation on OTAB and all the other bodies to deal with OTAB.

Let me just quote you a further piece of information for the record, and this comes from the Ministry of Education:

"School boards are the largest providers of adult basic literacy, numeracy, ESL"—that's English as a second language—"and French-language programs and the only institutions to provide official language training without fee to all classes of newcomers, landed immigrants, refugees and refugee claimants. A 1990 survey of adult ESL programs in the province indicated that about 44% of adults attending school board programs had not completed secondary school."

It just reiterates the important role that the publicly funded school boards play and must play if OTAB is going to be successful, and we want to make it successful.

Mrs Cunningham: The only thing I'd like you to respond to now is that we have a decision to make with regard to local boards. I've heard your position on the governing body, section 18 of the legislation talks about local training and adjustment boards. You should know, for the record, that the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, with the instructions and support of the federal Minister of Employment and Immigration, has set out some basic principles for the local boards. First is that they are not wedded to the formula—the 6, 6, 4, 2 formula—and that it can change community by community.

The local boards will have control of training dollars, not all of them and I can't be specific on that; I could talk to you later; it's too complicated. It has to be a bottom-fed, grass-roots membership, meaning representing the local community, appointed locally, and the training boards that are in place now that are doing a good job must be brought into this process.

I personally think those are good, basic principles. If we were to talk even further about the role of education, perhaps we should be writing those principles right into the bill so that we can ensure that they are followed and that they are the priorities of this government as well. I'd like your opinion on that.

Ms Dobell: I'd like to comment on including education as guaranteed representation on the local board. I think we want a community process which is collaborative. We

don't want to set the cat among the pigeons and have everybody take out their guns and shoot the neighbour. That's what's going to happen if there isn't more direction at the local level. You will get tremendous anxiety and turf upset.

If you bring people to the table, if you bring the education trainers to the table at the local level, I think you'll see cooperation and I think you'll see collaboration, so I hope the legislation will so indicate.

I don't think you can make this work if the providers aren't cooperating. It will get lost in a mass of detail and bureaucracy, but if you get them to the table, I think they're willing to cooperate. They know it has to be done and they know there's far more need than we could ever meet. It isn't that we're all fighting over scarce clients. The clientele is huge, and we know there must be cooperation, but we must be at the table if we're to be able to work it out. That's one comment. I think the legislation should include that and be more directive about the membership of local boards and the inclusion of the school board sector at the local level.

1430

Mrs Cunningham: The frustration of this process is that we have not heard from the Minister of Education on this, and I'm just wondering how closely you've worked. We literally never talk about the role of education here. People who come before the committee do, but we do not talk about it. I see my colleague looking at me with serious disdain. I can tell you that I am the critic for Colleges and Universities, Skills Development and Education, and I hear nothing from Education with regard to apprenticeship training, period.

Mr Sutherland: I know.

Mrs Cunningham: You would agree with me, Mr Chairperson, because you sit across from me in the House and you listen to my questions.

The Chair: I listen carefully to your questions.

Mrs Cunningham: Given that, I don't know why we haven't heard from Education. I'm just wondering how excited you are about the involvement or lack of involvement on behalf of the Ministry of Education.

Ms Dobell: We'll start with Gerry. We've got to take his blood pressure first. Okay, Gerry.

Mr Blake: We take the view that our minister has an advocacy role with respect to the coalition that you see in front of us. We know that the OTAB legislation is vested in another ministry. However, we have posited here today very strongly that it may have serious impact and have indicated what we want to do in terms of acting as a true partner in the spirit of labour force development and training.

We have serious concerns that our own minister has not been an advocate for us to the degree we would like him to be, given the statistics that you see in front of you with this report which talks about the track record that we currently have in adult and continuing education. We have made serious efforts, and in fairness to the minister, he did meet with our group in the summer. We have been meeting with his officials, but we have yet to get some clear answers

on the kinds of questions that we have put here in this paper. The Ministry of Education and the Minister of Education have an important role to play here, and we would very much like to be a stronger advocate.

If I could close with this comment, so I don't take away from other questions, we take the view that we can advertise to our ratepayers, who are also your constituents, that we offer elementary, secondary, adult and continuing education programs. That's what we advertise, that's what we want our minister to say and that's what we want our minister to support.

Ms Dobell: I'd like to—

The Chair: I know you would, but Mr Ramsay is going to get really upset with me if he doesn't get his 15 minutes.

Ms Dobell: He's more important than we are. Go ahead, Mr Ramsay.

The Chair: No, no.

Ms Dobell: We hope he's going to be more important.

The Chair: I don't want him mad at me. It's just the kind of guy I am. Now, Mr Ramsay, do you want to let this presenter finish her response?

Mr Ramsay: Absolutely.

The Chair: Thank you. Go ahead, ma'am.

Ms Dobell: In the statistics we gave you, the school boards are serving at least one million adults a year in various different programs. Of that, at least 500,000, or at least a half, are funded with grants and are not general interest courses; 500,000 are in the credit, the literacy and so on.

I guess I'd like to present the metaphor of the construction of a house. I'm sure lots of you have built your houses or you've decided whether you'll buy a house, and one of the first things you do is you figure out what the foundation is like. You go down and you see, "Is the damned thing going to stand?"

I suggest to you that OTAB isn't going to stand if it's just built on its current concept unless you put something under the other side of the house. The other side of the house are these statistics, the adults who are in our services and taking our programs. Because there is no lifelong learning policy of this government, no decision as to whether adults have educational rights to secondary school education or whether they can be stopped from coming back if they need to come back, and because right this minute we have the inside information, or the rumoured information, that the government may limit and ration the return of adults to secondary school, we can't understand how you can talk about OTAB and how great it's going to be when meanwhile, back at the camp, they've got the knife out and they're saying to adults: "You can't come back. You maybe won't be able to take those secondary credits that you need for your retraining."

So, for goodness' sake, let's get both sides of the house together. The foundation has to be balanced.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you, Ms Dobell, for your comments there. I'd like to thank the Chair for allowing me to go ahead. I'm going to have to leave after this series of

questions, but I must tell you that all my other colleagues would like to engage you in some questions and some discussion.

First of all, I'd like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to meet with you earlier today. I got a very full brief and I appreciate that. I felt that was very helpful, and in fact you helped me clarify an amendment that I wanted to bring forward.

I have been very concerned from day one, with the introduction of the OTAB legislation, as to the total representation of all the groups out there, and especially the educators. I want you to know, as I said this morning, that I don't think the people who deliver the service should be dominating OTAB. I agree with the government on that. As you've said, it should be client-driven. So we're going to have to make sure that the worker and the employer side dominate this thing.

But you offer a lot of expertise, you have a lot of knowledge because you are in the training business, and I think the point you made today is that a lot of people maybe don't understand that you're in the training business too; you're not just educators handling the elementary and the secondary school panels, but you train a lot of adults in Ontario. That news maybe isn't out there as much as it should be, and maybe through these deliberations we can promote that.

I'm prepared to move an amendment that would, I think, bring some balance to OTAB on both sides of the educational equation. I think people might wonder why I would move an amendment that would include you on the OTAB board, because the notion is that you're there already, but I really didn't understand until today when you spoke to me that you are only there through an agreement from the educational reference group and that there's no guarantee that you will always be there.

I would be prepared to move an amendment, when we get into clause-by-clause, that would ensconce, if you will, three education representatives on the OTAB board: one to represent private trainers, because I think they're big players too, and I think the colleges and the school boards should be on there. I think you need three seats. You need a very strong reference committee along with that, a reference committee that is supported with some funding, so that those three people have got tremendous input by the other two people who aren't right at the table but that they get closer to the table, because they've got the resources to handle it.

I guess one thing I just want to ask is if you think that would satisfy your requirements.

Ms Dobell: Well, on representation that would be a tremendous help, but I guess I have to go right down to the local level, because to the extent that the action is at the local level, that's also where we need to be: Up here must be mirrored down there. On the councils, of course, which will have different numbers of people on them, I think you can't make this work unless you have representation from the delivering agent, of which we are one of the major players. So I think it has to be not only the provincial one, but the local and the councils as well.

Mr Ramsay: I must tell you that my feeling about OTAB is that the most important aspect of it actually is at the LTAB level, the local council level. To be consistent with my thinking, I must tell you that I don't have the total answer yet as to how to solve that problem, because what I've been saying and what I firmly believe is that there's got to be a great degree of flexibility in the composition of the local boards.

I haven't been there yet to dictate what the local boards should look like, because I really want the local boards to be developed through a community of interest, regionally, so that we don't impose geographic boundaries on boards. I'd like those boards that do develop regionally to reflect the needs and the desires and the goals of those areas. I'm still grappling with that: Do we impose some guidelines to those? We are told it might not be possible because the federal government is involved in this, and it may not be possible in provincial legislation to dictate something that another level of government has a say in.

But I hear you and I think you've got to be there. Maybe the way to start to get you there is to do at least what I can at this point, which is to make sure you're on the OTAB board, and I'm open to the other for sure. I'll defer to my colleagues now.

1440

Ms Dobell: The other thing to look at, and I know your committee has heard about it, is the decision-making process at the OTAB. There's been a discussion of double majorities or enhanced majorities or triple majorities, and I guess our statement has to be that you must find a decision-making process which will allow the education representatives, who will be in a very small minority—of the 22 people who will be on the board, there'll only be a very small number of them; even if you increase it they'll still be a small number. They must be full participants, and if you go for a double majority then they aren't. They're only advisers. They have no vote really.

At the moment, we've looked at such things as triple majorities. We're not coming in on a specific position, but you have to find a decision-making process which allows the education representatives, whoever they may be, to be full participants.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): Thank you very much for your presentation. It's good to see you again, Jean.

This is a very solid presentation with some very good points. I think it confirms what the members of the opposition have been thinking all along, that Bill 96 is more noteworthy for what it does not do rather than for what it actually does.

It's kind of like being told we're about to set off on a journey in a car. We don't know what the destination is, and when we examine the car, it merely consists of a frame; there's no engine, there are no doors, none of the components that are going to help us to start up.

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): At least we've started the car.

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, your second problem is the matter of auto insurance coverage.

Mr McGuinty: Yes. This is true. If I had the time, I'd love to turn the floor over to you, Mr Chair, but perhaps the government members will concede that.

I want to ask you about this issue of representation, because what the government tells us over and over is that, "Look, folks, we're all in this together, and those 22 directors are mandated to act in the broader public interest." Surely the public interest has, within its purview, the interests of school boards. How do you respond to that?

Ms Dobell: We've been the subject over recent years, and perhaps every day in the paper *Her Majesty's* loyal opposition, meaning the *Globe and Mail*, I guess. There's a lot of school-bashing about, so we don't feel very loved.

Mr McGuinty: Join the party.

Ms Dobell: I don't feel very comfortable, nor does our group feel very comfortable with, "Oh, yes, you will be included in the public sector or the public interest." Certainly it didn't start out that way. The initial paper forgot about our role. In the hearings apparently, according to Dianne Cunningham, people have said we haven't participated, and so we feel that consistently there's a downplaying of our role. We feel also that the Ministry of Education, because it has not established a policy of lifelong learning and the educational rights of adults, we're let down. Our role isn't recognized. We feel that the only way to get the picture right is to include our group.

Mr McGuinty: I think you make a very good point. A number of the other witnesses who have appeared before us have remarked that the primary and secondary schools have a vital role to play in this continuum of training and education. Some of those remarks have been kinder than others, but in any event it's absolutely critical, it's vital that you be able to serve that role.

I want to speak to you about one particular matter on page 4 of your paper. There's reference to almost a million adults being enrolled in continuing education programs. Approximately half of those are involved in non-credit courses. What are non-credit courses? What kinds of courses would these be?

Ms Dobell: Looking at the figures, I think the non-credit courses referred to here would be general interest courses, often of a recreational nature, for which they pay the user fee to cover the cost. But in those non-credit courses we do a lot of training in computers. We use our technical equipment. These are for people who just want the computer training and have never had it before. They don't want the credit; they just want to know how to use a computer. They come back to us even though we're doing it on a very quick and dirty basis where they just get the training they need. So it is what it says. It's general interest, but it ranges all over into financial management and so on.

Mr McGuinty: Do you think you could make a good argument to the effect that those courses fall properly within this ambit of training and education?

Ms Dobell: You'd have to make a division, just as at the college level, the colleges have a lot of non-credit courses which are recognized for grant. Each year, the colleges list those courses which are non-credit but which

they think are worthy of grant. They send that in to the Ministry of Colleges and Universities, and the ministry says: "Yes, we agree with you. These are training, even though there's no credit." Then those courses are funded in common recognition that they are in the training category. We could do the same. A lot of them are more recreational, something to do, but some, like computer training, are very clearly training.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: If I could just add, there's a lot of misinformation or confusion regarding the actual training or adjustment programs that school boards provide. There are numerous boards now—they tend to be in the larger urban areas, but not necessarily—that work in partnerships with local industries and unions in developing specific training needs for the employees for that particular company or dealing with matters such as layoffs, adjustment training and so on. There's a whole gamut of extra types of programs that are out there which school boards are fundamentally involved in, working with the local businesses and unions to ensure the training needs for their clientele.

The real bottom line we want to say is that the school board sector wants a role in the future for any emerging training needs that should be out there. We don't know what they are today because the circumstances change tomorrow, but we want to be a fundamental partner in it because we believe we have the facilities, resources and the trained and motivated personnel to do the job.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you. My colleague has a question.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. Very briefly, because I know there isn't a great deal of time remaining, we have a document from the ministry which speaks about the programs that are going to go to OTAB. It's interesting that there are only going to be three programs under the Ministry of Education—Futures, youth employment counselling and Summer Experience in the trades—that are slated to go to the OTAB organization. Programs such as Ontario Basic Skills, special support allowances, basic skills in the workplace, literacy and ESL are not slated at this time to go to the OTAB organization. I'm wondering if you could comment on whether that's your expectation, because it seems that a great deal of the work you do is not going to be in OTAB.

Mr Blake: You're right. This particular list you have does indicate some programs for transfer and others not, but we have yet to see specific criteria. In fairness to the Ministry of Education, we've had dialogue with some of the officials about possibilities of what might be transferred and what might not be, but that's open to debate until such time as we get that official information, because there may be a fair bit of discussion about programs that could be transferred, because we all have an interest in ESL programs and adult basic education programs.

Our concern was to be involved in the process up front. Our concern was to have them talk to us about program transfer. What are the criteria that are being considered for transfer? We would like to know what these things are.

I guess, all being said and done, in terms of the programs they wish to transfer, we want to reiterate to the committee that we do support the spirit of the legislation. But what's the hurry? Let's slow this down and get it right. Let's slow it down and address these concerns we're talking about, because we suggest it's flawed legislation: flawed process, flawed product.

The Chair: The balance of time is to be shared by Mr Sutherland, Mr Wilson and Mr Martin as they wish.

1450

Before you begin, Ron Hansen, the Chair of finance and economics, who visited us—and who I, of course, permitted to sit at the table and encouraged him to ask questions, because that's democratic and anything else wouldn't be—had to leave to resume his chair. He did ask me to speak on his behalf in indicating that he is very pleased that in the Niagara region, the Lincoln county and Niagara South boards of education and all the other players have actively cooperated with each other. All the sectors have joined together and have very effectively and positively and constructively dealt with this particular issue. That's on behalf of Mr Hansen. Go ahead, sir.

Mr Sutherland: The same thing can be said about Oxford county. One of the superintendents of the Oxford board is very active with the CITC. They do some of the technical training in one of the schools. That type of stuff is going on. I think everyone recognizes that, and I think it needs to be stated here that there are no attempts being made to exclude education from the process. I think some of the opposition members have tried to imply that. Mr Offer talks about the list that was put before this committee.

Mr Offer: It's your ministry.

Mr Sutherland: I think it's important to realize, first of all, two things: First, with the programs that will transfer to OTAB, from Skills Development and the ones you mentioned, it's logical that they've gone. Your group has already said you want to be involved in the process in terms of talking about the other ones. That's why it says "require further review." Those decisions have not been made yet.

Mr Offer says that's a problem, because there's not enough going over there. You're saying you want to be involved in the process. I think we're trying to satisfy both. There's nothing here to say that these are the only programs OTAB will ever get or that new programs won't be developed. I think that needs to be stated. Everyone recognizes the clear role that education plays in training. They play a very important role, have done and shall continue to do so.

I'm sorry Ms Cunningham has left. I'm glad she's so strongly in support of the public sector role in here. I would encourage you to check the Hansards: When we've had discussions about paragraphs 15 and 16 of the objects, the two other parties have seemed to think that those favour the public sector too much and feel that, the way it's written, it squeezes out the private sector. I'd be interested in your comments on that aspect.

I'd also be interested to have you give us a sense of what role the school boards have specifically played in the

education-training steering committee. You say you are not specifically mentioned in the legislation. It's quite clear that you're not, but neither are any of the other education sectors specifically mentioned. It's put in a general sense: education-trainers.

My final point is that in terms of many of the regulations etc.—that has been mentioned—that has to be done in discussion with the federal government, particularly regarding the local boards.

I'd like your comments about how the legislation relates to mention of the public sector.

Ms Dobell: We feel that the education-trainer sector is underrepresented, that the two seats on OTAB itself are inadequate. We're here to argue for increased representation of education-trainers on OTAB and on its local councils, of course, guaranteed.

Mr Sutherland: But more specifically about who is delivering the programs.

Ms Dobell: School board representation is what we're here to speak to. We've tried to make the case that we are essentially involved in this. There is no way we have any option. As our people become adults and leave us and go into the workforce, the interface is there; it cannot be avoided.

So there is no option: We're into this, and it will help our delivery to the younger children if we are involved, because we'll understand more the relation to the workforce and the transition, and it will essentially help the adults who need to come back and get our level of training in order to be able to hold a job.

So when we have been the biggest players and will continue to be the biggest players in literacy, in ESL, and we have this burgeoning population coming back to high school, who needs it—and they're voting with their feet; they're all voluntary students—we can't imagine how we can be left out.

Mr Sutherland: But you're not. That's the point I'm making: You're not being left out of the process.

Ms Dobell: We say we need a guaranteed seat on the OTAB and we need a seat on the local training adjustment board and we need to know we'll be on the councils.

Mr Gary Wilson: You see that not every group can be represented. It's this sectoral approach which allows the labour market partners—business and labour, the equity groups and educator-trainers—to have the mandate with government to come up with the programs.

The other thing is that as long as the programs are driven by those who need them—I think you mentioned that it is driven by the people who need it, and I think you agreed with that. I'd just like to come back to that, to elaborate on why you see that.

You've made a very strong presentation here. You've participated with the education and training steering committee, so you seem to have access to it. There are seats available on the reference groups and the councils that are tied to OTAB as well as the local participation. So with all of that, why do you feel it's not enough?

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: What we'd like to say, and I know that Jane would like to add it also, is that school

boards have been responding to the needs of the community and responding to the needs of the clients. That is why there have been these wonderful partnerships and other changes in the types of programs that school boards provide. So I want to dispel the myth that school boards currently do not meet the needs of the adult population in the community. They do, and very successfully. We heard the Chair of the committee report about the Niagara-Lincoln region, and there are other examples.

The other point we bluntly want to say is that we believe that public school boards are accountable bodies. We're dealing with public moneys and therefore we strongly believe that the public's best interests would be served by having public school representation on OTAB, on the local boards and on the other bodies of OTAB.

Ms Dobell: We're there now: The education trainers have nominated two people, one of them school board related, as well as other. But that is happenstance. We are not guaranteed a representative. It was the luck of the draw that we got this marvellous person, whom we're very pleased with, but that was only circumstantial.

Mr Gary Wilson: It's probably not surprising either, but no other sector is guaranteed a representative. As you know, they are to have the public interest in mind as well, and they have to work with the other people on the board, with the government's views as regards our social and economic policies.

Mr Blake: A quick response would be that we recognized the problems inherent in trying to represent everyone, and that's the point, with due respect, that you're trying to make.

I think we have made a very persuasive case here that we're a broad-based coalition and we're not some minor player: We are a major player in this business and should be recognized as such, and with respect, Mr Wilson, we do not feel we have been adequately represented. To equate us with some of the more minor players I think is somewhat unfair. What we're asking is for guaranteed representation. As our chairperson has indicated, it's by happenstance within the selection process that we have a rep. Conceivably we could not, and given the statistics you see in front of you, that would be a tragedy.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, and those statistics, as my colleague has pointed out—I mean, the programs you seem to fear being lost to OTAB are not being considered by OTAB. On this sheet you passed out, these programs are all funded out of a different agency, the grants.

Ms Dobell: Yes, but then we have a Ministry of Education currently considering that it's going to cap those programs, that it's going to stop adults going back to—so you're losing on the swings and the roundabouts.

Mr Gary Wilson: All I can say is that OTAB is not going to be responsible for these programs that are now being delivered by you.

Ms Dobell: As long as that's clearly put out, that would be a help. I see our time's running out. Perhaps I should sum up, because I know you have—

Mr Sutherland: Tony's got a question or two.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I have a couple of questions that maybe come at this from the other end, which is actually the delivery of service ultimately, when this all comes about. I have some real concerns, in reflecting on some of the comments you've made.

First of all, I would contest your statement that the ministry hasn't been involved or that the minister isn't interested or isn't working to make sure that programs are delivered in the most effective and productive way. I sit on the refinancing of education council, and one of the very clear items on that agenda is to define what it is that the Ministry of Education delivers and how we pay for that and all that, and that I think is directly connected here.

In my community, we have a number of organizations, including the separate school board and the public school board, delivering adult education, particularly the students who are returning to school, and at this point there is no effort to cooperate or coordinate, except from the YMCA and the community college. They have come under one roof with Futures and the youth employment program.

I know you're suggesting that if there were a somebody on the OTAB from your jurisdiction, you would begin at least from there to talk about the possibility of cooperation and coordination.

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The Chair: Do you want these people to have an opportunity to respond, sir?

Mr Martin: Other than that recommendation, how do other recommendations in here speak to that real dilemma of so many organizations in communities—

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Martin. I want to thank the—

Ms Dobell: If I could—

The Chair: One moment. I wish Mr Martin had left you more time to reply, but we'll be able to go into the next group's time by around 50 seconds.

Mr Martin: I had another question for you too, but I'm not going to get to ask it. Maybe some other time, some other place. Thanks very much.

The Chair: Quickly, please, because other people are scheduled.

Mr Martin: Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chair: Aren't you going to wait for the answer? Go ahead.

Ms Dobell: I'd like to answer his question. I'd like my one-and-a-half minute wrapup.

The Chair: No. We've used up the hour.

Ms Dobell: Mr Martin, I think the fact that we're here as a coalition today shows a new resolution on the part of us all in the school sector to coordinate and work together at the local level. I think that's evolutionary and will come, but I think what has brought us together is our common feeling in the face of the proposal of OTAB: that the legislation is flawed in its lack of openness, its lack of audit, its lack of appeal and its lack of the decision-making definition, which includes us, that the regulations aren't out, so we don't know what it's going to look like in the future—

The Chair: I really have to tell you that's it. I want to thank you kindly on behalf of the committee. You've been most insightful and helpful to the committee. You've obviously provoked a great deal of thought, hopefully, on the part of committee members. We are grateful to you for spending this past hour with us. To those who joined you, a similar expression of gratitude.

Ms Dobell: Thank you very much for hearing us. You must be hearing lots and lots.

ONTARIO PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOYEES UNION

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. Please come forward, tell us your names, your titles, if any, and proceed with your comments. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for comments.

Mr Bill Keihnbaum: My name's Bill Keihnbaum. I'm the first vice-president-treasurer of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union.

Mr Dean Barner: Dean Barner, chair of colleges of applied arts and technology academic, the faculty for the province of Ontario colleges.

Mr Jay Jackson: Jay Jackson, chair of the CAAT support division of OPSEU.

Mr Keihnbaum: OPSEU welcomes the opportunity of presenting our views on the draft legislation establishing the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. OPSEU represents 57,000 Ontario public servants, 17,000 professors, counsellors, librarians and support staff in the community colleges and about 22,000 workers in the broader public service.

With that kind of representation, we've had a multifaceted interest in the establishment of OTAB. First, public workers such as we represent are no different than any other kind of worker when it comes to seeking a just and fair society that produces secure and rewarding employment; second, many of our OPS members currently work in the programs that will be transferred to the control of OTAB; third, our CAAT members deliver programs that are funded from sources that will eventually be controlled by OTAB; and fourth, many of our broader public sector members have little employment security and are anxious to have access to both the governance and programs that will be provided by OTAB.

As one of the largest affiliates of the Ontario Federation of Labour, we have worked closely with the OFL in developing its positions on education training and OTAB. Through the OFL we have also participated directly in discussions with government as the founding principles of OTAB were being formed. OPSEU endorses completely the submission of the OFL to the standing committee. Our being here separate from the OFL is no indication that we are of a different mind from the OFL on the presentation that it made.

Our initial, primary concern with respect to the establishment of OTAB was the effect that it might have on our members who work in the Ontario public service. First of all, for the record, we believe there are governance and delivery models for training and adjustment that are superior to

the model proposed in the legislation. We discuss this point more fully on pages 14 to 21 of our brief to the local boards panel, and those pages are attached for reference. But we've recognized that our views on a training model are not going to be accepted, so we're willing to make a commitment to this model and to make it work well to suit our needs, provided two conditions are met.

The first condition was that employees transferred from the employ of government to the employ of OTAB need to maintain all the employment rights, benefits and collective agreement under OTAB that they had under government. We have a responsibility to our dues-paying members that this happen. The second condition is that labour is a true partner in OTAB governance. The draft legislation appears to guarantee both points. So in some ways we're not here to argue change; we're developing a defensive posture here.

Section 17 stipulates that employee appointments or transfers will be done under the Public Service Act. This guarantees that OPSEU's OPS members who follow their programs to OTAB will maintain their status as provincial public servants and will remain covered by all the terms and conditions of the collective agreement between OPSEU and the government of Ontario.

Section 9 establishes the nature of the relationship between the labour market partners and OTAB in a way that makes labour a true partner.

Any change in either of these provisions of the draft legislation either now or in the future would be a complete betrayal of the basis on which OPSEU is supporting OTAB.

With respect to the effect on the colleges, once our OPS members were taken care of, we next turned our sights to other particular danger points for us. We're particularly concerned about what might happen to the college system when the proposed OTAB comes on stream. Almost 25% of college funding and over 2,500 jobs are funded by dollars that will come under OTAB's control. Ontario's public community colleges need to be maintained. Ontario taxpayers' investment in the colleges over the past 20 years has been substantial and cannot be jeopardized by government's failure to secure the long-term health of the colleges. This security must be done in a clear memorandum of agreement that will guide OTAB in its decision-making. It is unthinkable that a parallel training system could or would be set up using money diverted from the colleges, thereby allowing colleges to wither and die.

We fear that the private training sector views OTAB as a source of large sums of previously unavailable money and is eager to have the legislation turn over the keys to the treasury.

However, to us it is axiomatic to say that public dollars spent on training and education should go to meet public policy objectives. Any further weakening of the already frail public sector institutions through a redirection of the dwindling stream of public funding to private sector deliverers could have dire, even catastrophic, consequences in service areas well beyond those solely concerned with OTAB's activities.

We wish to emphasize the view found on page 33 of the OTAB discussion paper. I won't read it to you. It acknowledges that there will be different methods of funding, but it also acknowledges that OTAB must function in a way such that it doesn't undermine the stability of publicly funded institutions. It also makes reference to a memorandum of understanding, but such a memorandum of understanding between the colleges, government and OTAB is not in place, and we look to the legislation to guarantee that OTAB will not become a major agent of privatization delivering a death blow to the colleges.

If OTAB allows private, non-public trainers to cherry-pick, leaving only the tough or non-profitable programs to the colleges, the critical mass that is necessary for the CAATs to offer a broad range of programs at all levels cannot be achieved. We argue that the colleges must be recognized as the training institutions of choice, given their experience and track record and their accountability to all training stakeholders. The demise of the colleges would be a most unfortunate byproduct of OTAB.

Paragraph 4(1)16, which establishes as an OTAB objective "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems," provides only small comfort. It is 16th out of the 18 objectives. It is even behind the objective which could be used as the launching pad for major privatization initiatives, objective 15.

1510

Any attempts to change the draft to increase private trainers' access to training funds or to diminish colleges' access would mark the start of open warfare with OPSEU and the labour movement.

We acknowledge colleges are far from perfect; I worked there myself before I got this elected position, and probably will go back there some day. There are many weaknesses in the delivery of programs by CAATs, but inventing an alternative, parallel training system does not make sense. It's much more sensible to use OTAB dollars to bend colleges to the will of users.

We also grant that most not-for-profit education and training groups receive public funds and together play a role in the current labour market training system. In fact OPSEU represents some of them. We support funding for these groups under OTAB as long as the services are complementary to the work of public institutions and do not represent a contracting-out of functions best accomplished by colleges. We believe the draft legislation permits this to take place.

Our final concern as OPSEU with OTAB was what access workers in the broader public service would have to OTAB governance and programs. During the discussions leading up to the release of the draft legislation, we were concerned that they would be denied access.

Paragraph 4(1)1 clearly establishes one of the objectives of OTAB to be to provide labour force development programs and services for the public and private sectors. The reference to the public sector is all-inclusive and does satisfy our concerns, especially when read in conjunction with assurances Minister Allen gave to CUPE Ontario

president Sid Ryan in a letter dated December 21, where the minister writes:

"I want you to have no doubt about the government's commitment to the creation of a common table within OTAB where broader public sector employers and unions would address training policy and labour market development."

That objective, 4(1)1, and the minister's assurance certainly diminished our concerns about BPS employees and employers being shunted off to the side. We would urge the committee to resist any attempts to weaken the connection between OTAB and the broader public sector.

In conclusion, the draft legislation as it currently stands protects the rights of current civil servants, provides a platform to argue for maintaining viable community colleges and grants access to employers and employees in the broader public service. All three ingredients must be maintained in the final legislation if OTAB is to be successful.

The Vice-Chair (Mr Bob Huget): Thank you very much. Questions. Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Sorry, I missed your name at the beginning.

Mr Keihnbaum: Bill Keihnbaum.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks, Mr Keihnbaum, and thanks for the presentation. It speaks directly to a few of the issues that have been raised here by other presenters in our discussion. Certainly, the education and training sector has raised the issue in particular of the public and the private trainers.

I'd like your views on this. You've given some of them in your brief, of course, but just to put the shoe on the other foot or at least to look at it from the other side and see what kind of a split can exist here, or what room there is for a sharing of the training field between the private and the public sectors.

Mr Keihnbaum: We've grappled with this, because in a theoretically perfect world, of course, the public sector would get it all, but none of us lives in a theoretically perfect world; we have to live in the real world. In grappling with the issue, the general conclusion we've come to is that if the present balance between for-profit, not-for-profit and public trainers were to be maintained, that would be acceptable to us. What we're primarily concerned about would be that there would be a big shift in the current balance.

Mr Gary Wilson: Then are you satisfied, and again in your presentation you seem to be sure that there's enough representation on the board, say, the projected representation that would allow those sectors in fact to be well represented and their points of view to be represented.

Mr Keihnbaum: We're always suspicious of business interests as being—you know, they're there because they're good and like to make a profit, and any opportunity they see for turning a profit or for somebody else to turn a profit is a place that we expect the business appointees to the OTAB to go. I can't get mad at them for that. You can't get mad at an apple tree for having apples.

We think that the for-profit inclinations of the OTAB members will be well represented there. We're not sure that the defenders of the public sector will be as well represented,

but we're certainly not lobbying for changes in the proposed structure of the governance board. Twenty-two spots, or 23, whatever it is today, are plenty for a board, and if you try to allocate them across all the sectors in Ontario society, we don't have any complaint with the allocation that's suggested by the draft legislation.

Mr Gary Wilson: How do you see the representation on the local boards working out in your experience at the community level? Do you think the goals, I guess you'd say, of OTAB are well recognized and that there's a willingness to meet them through cooperation?

Mr Keihnbaum: No, I think there are all kinds of different expectations about local boards than what there are about the central board, and I know that from talking to people who are keen to have local boards, ranging from those of the sentiments of Mahatma Gandhi to those of Attila the Hun. They have all different views of how local boards should work. I guess our view is that the governing structure of local boards should not vary significantly from the central board.

Mr Gary Wilson: Do you think, though, from your experience that the openness—well, openness—I guess the commitment to the principles that we're establishing with OTAB can be established at the local boards?

Mr Keihnbaum: I'm an optimist. I think there are going to be lots of bumps along the way, but I think that when you bring the partners together the way it's suggested on the central board and force them to work out solutions—hey, I live in a world of collective bargaining and no matter how bad the problem is and how strong the forces against you are out there, there is always some resolution to be found if mechanisms are put in place that force people to find the resolutions.

Mr Gary Wilson: Just what is your view of the training field now? Do you think there could be a better job done in that area?

Mr Keihnbaum: I spent 22 years at Cambrian College in Sudbury trying to make it better, and it has a long way to go yet before we'd stop. My colleagues here are both involved in reviews of governance, in particular at the community college level, because we know—if this were another committee, we could spend a whole day talking about that. We think it's the pits and could be massively improved.

Mr Gary Wilson: Do you think there is some hope that this will happen, say, out of cooperative efforts like OTAB being carried over into other areas as well?

Mr Keihnbaum: I think it has the potential to set a model that colleges are afraid to follow right now.

Mr Gary Wilson: One of your colleagues is sort of nodding approval. I'd like to get his views.

Mr Barner: I was just going to go a step further. I think it's going to be potentially an exciting sort of venue where we might be able to turn around some of the perceptions that have existed for the past 25 years in the college system, that by having this sort of joint labour and business partnership towards training, we'll be able to emulate that within the colleges and I think perform what the

colleges' mandate should be all along, which is to serve training and education needs and not necessarily their own needs. I think this is going to be a great opportunity.

Mr Gary Wilson: Almost like bringing the community into the college and having that interaction.

Mr Barner: Exactly. I think we're coming of age to some degree anyway in the college system and this is going to be a jump-start in a different direction in training. I think if we can convince our employer to be on side, which I think by and large has been profitable in the last year or two, then we can make some real headway.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I'd like to ask a question on a part of the brief that you didn't read. That deals with your position on the local board. You might be interested to know that we've had some presentations from community groups that have said this will fail unless the local boards have a significant role in deciding what is needed in their communities, that the communities are diverse, that the needs differ, that the local board, the community, is best able to meet those particular needs.

I'd like to read this one part that's on page 18 of your brief:

"It is for these same reasons we maintain that local training and adjustment boards should not have spending powers. There will be too much pressure on local boards to purchase the least costly mode of delivery, eg, from a private firm 'low balling' an offer to get the contract."

I think, with respect, those people in the community might feel a tad insulted by that and I'm wondering if you could explain why you feel you cannot give the local boards the type of empowerment they think and believe is necessary for this whole structure to be successful.

Mr Keihnbaum: First of all, I'm sorry they're insulted by that, but I'm just as insulted by people on the local boards saying: "Colleges are a piece of shit. Don't ever go there." So there is a tension sometimes between community for-profit groups and the college system.

1520

The question becomes, who in the end signs the cheque? I think local boards should have a major say in the initiatives funded through OTAB. Whether they should in the end sign the cheque is really what our concern is, that if there's not some check or balance or some pretty commonly understood central guideline on the type of training that could be developed—I used the term "balkanization" in there and we don't want that—you'll end up with significantly different standards of training across the province.

The debate between, I guess, us and the local board—I hate to debate in a theoretical sense, because you opened by saying that local boards should have a significant say or a significant influence on what happens in the community with respect to training; I agree with that. So what we're really debating is, what does "significant influence" mean? I guess I would say I don't think they should sign the cheques. Where we go beyond that, I think, is open for resolution between a central OTAB and the local boards.

Mr Offer: In response to that question, I think we know that you're probably going to have a pretty big role to play on the OTAB board from the composition of the

board, and there are people who are very concerned whether the community will have a major role to play. This will not succeed without the community's involvement. They are the ones that are best able to address it.

I want to address the issue of private versus public. We've just had a presentation—I'm sure you were here to hear that—which spoke about partnership and said: "We're not really in competition with the private sector in terms of training. We all want to work together."

I think, on balance, reading your presentation, that isn't the same message I get. I think the message I get from your presentation is: "Hold back on the private deliverers. The public can do the job very nicely, thank you." That, I believe, might cause some concern and certainly, in many ways, flies in the face of the presentation just previous to this. I'm wondering if you believe that the private training area should not be increased, that it might not have to be decreased, but should not be increased.

Mr Keihnbaum: In response to Mr Wilson's question, I said that the present split between the various training sectors is one we're content to live with.

Mr Offer: But things evolve, things advance, there are different demands, and it may be that the private sector moves into other areas quicker than the public. It's not to be critical of one or the other, but it is a fact of life that one—in some instances, the public sector might move into an area; in others, the private sector. To say, "What you've got now is all you're going to get," to the private sector is really sort of saying, "You're always going to be in 1992 or 1993."

Mr Keihnbaum: But the same applies to what we're saying to the public sector too: "What you've got now is all you're going to get. No matter how good you get, you're not going to get more."

I think the issue here is, though, that as workers in the public sector and as legislators, it's our obligation to provide a public sector that's as responsive to the providing of public service as what the public wants. That's what we're advocating here.

Your question seems to be based on the thought that the public sector is going to lag behind while all these innovative creatures in the private sector go ahead. We're trying to stop that. I think both public and private sectors can be quite innovative. Here is a very innovative public sector initiative, the OTAB.

The Chair: You've got 30 seconds, and I mean it.

Mr McGuinty: Okay. I'm going to be frank with you. I'm disappointed with the tone of your document here and your presentation. It makes me feel very uncomfortable about the prospects for success of OTAB if you're bringing this confrontational approach.

From my perspective, as a member of the public and speaking on behalf of my constituents, we don't care who delivers the damned services as long as they're delivered well and on a cost-effective basis. If that means one grows ahead of the other, we don't care. We just want the service on a cost-effective basis.

The Chair: All right. Ms Marland wants her time.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): I'd like to ask this delegation—I think you were here during the previous deputation's presentation.

Mr Keihnbaum: Only for the last 15 minutes.

Mrs Marland: Perhaps you're aware of the figures they presented to us about the percentage increase in adults enrolling in the daytime credit courses through our secondary school system.

Mr Keihnbaum: Yes.

Mrs Marland: You did hear their comments on that score? Yes. When you look at the kinds of figures that are involved in these programs, and obviously those programs today come solely under the jurisdiction of those school boards that operate those particular programs, do you have any concerns about what will happen if the Ministry of Education decides that these programs shouldn't be funded through the local school boards giving the local school boards that much autonomy?

Mr Keihnbaum: First of all, we don't represent employees in that sector, and I have to confess it's not something we've given much thought to. So if I gave you an opinion, it wouldn't be very informed.

Mrs Marland: When you say you don't represent employees in that sector, in other words, you're not here speaking for anybody except union people. Is that it?

Mr Keihnbaum: I'm the vice-president of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union and my constituents elected me to come and talk on their behalf, and yes, that's why I'm here, just like probably you're here representing your constituents. Our constituency is primarily in the colleges, although, just in case there's misunderstanding here, our argument for the public sector also includes the other part of the public sector in the education system, including post-secondary and public schools.

Mrs Marland: I guess I have an advantage over you because I do represent constituents across this province, including my own riding, and in my own riding I have union and non-union constituents. I do not so narrowly focus my questioning and my viewpoint on any issue to the exclusion of people outside a particular group.

I'm very aware of who you're here representing, but surely, in your discussions about developing your opinions on behalf of your union on this very important subject of OTAB, you must have looked beyond the present membership in your union. I would suggest to you that some of these numbers of people who are going back to school are ultimately going to end up being members of your union, because that may be where their employment opportunity lies. So you must have some concern for people who come to your union membership through this educational opportunity. That's why I'm asking you whether you have any concern for a conflict between what OTAB will be offering and what in fact is now offered through some of these educational programs that exist today through the secondary school system.

Mr Keihnbaum: Again, our views were formulated analysing the needs of our members and the funding structures and the implications of what changing those structures

might mean in the secondary and elementary system. It's not something I'm well versed in. It's not something I'm prepared to talk about here. I came here to talk about OTAB and how it affects the members in OPSEU.

The Chair: I want to express this committee's gratitude to the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, and to you for speaking on its behalf and your membership's behalf so clearly and effectively. We are grateful to you, as we are to others who show interest in this issue and come here and express their views and help this committee in its particular process. I hope you and others are listened to by the members of the committee and that your input is put to valuable use, that is to say constructively, with the view to making this the good legislation that it should be.

Mr Keihnbaum: Thank you, Brother Chair.

Mrs Marland: Brother Chair? Well, you can call me Sister Margaret.

The Chair: Sister Margaret? Any time.

1530

OTAB STEERING COMMITTEE FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

The Chair: Our next participant is Stan Delaney. Mr Delaney, please come forward. Of course, anybody can obtain transcripts by way of Hansard of their presentation or any other part of this committee's hearings by writing to their MPP. Those transcripts are free of charge, as are the coffee and soft drinks here. Not that they haven't been paid for; the taxpayers have already paid dearly for that sort of stuff.

Mr Delaney, go ahead. Tell us a little bit about yourself, if you wish. Tell us what you'd like, and please leave us some time for some questions and dialogue.

Mr Stan Delaney: Thank you, committee members, for giving me the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon. My name is Stan Delaney. I work for the Advocacy Resource Centre for the Handicapped here in Toronto. I'm here speaking on behalf of the steering committee for persons with disabilities which was set up around the whole OTAB process. It's with that hat that I'm before you today.

My short career with this process went back to when the various ministry people were going around the province talking about the OTAB process, and then I became involved with the steering committee and shortly thereafter was selected to serve my constituency, which is people with disabilities, on the local boards consultation panel. I had the privilege—although sometimes during those hearings, I didn't think it was a privilege—of putting in 14 formal hearing days in 12 cities, representing 11 of the local boards.

We listened to over 465 individuals and groups provide their input and overview of the OTAB and the local board process. We were there to talk about local boards and hear what people had to say about local boards. We heard as much about the OTAB process itself.

When we were on the road, the panels heard a lot from school boards, unions, private trainers, chambers of commerce and CITCs. We heard from some community-based trainers, small business people and francophones. We

heard little from persons with disabilities, women and members of racial minorities, and we heard almost nothing from the unemployed, youth, aboriginal people and students.

Because the equity groups were not well represented in the 22 cities that the local board panels visited, as well as women and visible minorities, there was a special panel struck by that process to give those constituencies an opportunity to bring up some of the issues that weren't heard while we were on the road.

I must say that from my personal perspective, I don't think enough people were involved in the consultation process. I don't think very many people in Ontario understand the process that is going on as we speak, and the broad range of reform that's going to occur to fairly extensive systems within this province. That bothered me long before I started in this process, and it still does.

The pace of the process, which was often referred to as a forced march, was and continues to be a concern to me. However, I have supported the idea of the reforms to the training system that are proposed in the formation of OTAB because I believe in the need for inclusion of Ontario citizens who have been excluded from taking advantage of all the opportunities available in training.

That's my introduction. I'll now address what I've provided to you in the form of a brief. In terms of what will happen and what OTAB will mean to people with disabilities, from my perspective the answer depends on how the Ontario government interprets equity. To the steering committee I represent, equity means providing the accommodations that enable people with disabilities to participate in all federally and provincially funded labour force development programs and services.

Equity means providing essential supports like transportation, attendant care, sign language or oral interpreters, readers, assistive devices and other needed accommodations. Where should these accommodations be provided? In programs and services delivered by community colleges, universities, secondary schools and private trainers who receive funding from either the federal or provincial government.

Equity means access to the same training and apprenticeship programs that everyone else can choose from. Decades of vocational rehabilitation for people with disabilities have not moved many people with that label into the workforce. As many as 80% of persons with disabilities are not employed. I would say most of those people would like the opportunity to participate in the workforce but, due to circumstances far beyond their own means or control, are unable to do so. Too many have spent years in school and training programs and ended up taking a series of contract jobs that come and go, depending on fluctuating government priorities—and they are the ones fortunate enough to get the jobs. Many people work on short-term contracts; they don't have any benefits. It's extremely difficult. As I say, we will have to wait and see what equity will mean in the changes that come through OTAB.

I would like to emphasize that the need for accommodation in the form of human and technical support is crucial to the people I represent. In the Canada-Ontario labour force development agreement signed by the province in

1991, there is no provision for funds for accommodation. If accommodation is not provided by OTAB or through local boards, people with disabilities will continue to be excluded from the training.

Carol McGregor was here and made a presentation to you last week and identified many of the barriers to training that people with disabilities encounter. I'm not going to repeat those here at this time.

Getting to the specifics in Bill 96, there are three sections of the bill in which the language does not make me feel too confident that the kind of reforms needed within the system to make it accessible to people with disabilities will occur. I'm referring to the paragraphs which state "to seek to ensure." Paragraph 4(1)9 is "To seek to ensure access and equity in labour force development programs and services, so as to lead to the full participation of workers and potential workers in the labour force." Paragraph 4(1)10 is "To identify and seek to eliminate systemic and other discriminatory barriers to the full and effective participation of disadvantaged and underrepresented groups in labour force development programs and services." Paragraph 4(1)11 is "To seek to ensure that the special needs of people with disabilities are accommodated in labour force development programs and services."

In each case, the words "seek to" qualify the subsection too much. If OTAB does not ensure that these important measures occur, who is going to do it? No other ministry is going to voluntarily use its resources to meet a need generated by another ministry. That's not how I've seen the government work. As I'll explain in a minute, the opposite is true. I have an example for you.

1540

When the Time for Action report was released last spring, it was recommended that opportunity planning be used as a way to get long-term recipients off social assistance. I was there for the release of that report and asked the chair, Allan Moscovitch, where the funds would be coming from to provide the accommodations needed by people with disabilities. In that initiative, a large number of day care spaces were being made available to sole-support parents to make sure the transition for that group was going to be accomplished. I didn't see any reference in the report to the provision of accommodations to see that this need was taken care of.

Allan Moscovitch said that he realized that was a real problem, but he figured the new board being set up by OTAB would take care of that. In my discussions with people involved with OTAB, they are not thinking that any money within that process is going to take care of it. So the question I have is, who is going to take care of it?

I have also heard some people talk about vocational rehabilitation services, or VRS, as the solution to our accommodation needs. VRS is incapable of meeting current demands, and hundreds of people have given up trying to access those resources. VRS is underfunded and has extensive waiting lists, depending on where you live. The last I heard, people in Timmins have to wait three years to get the services of a VRS worker to even start to access the resources available there.

Yet one of the purposes of this act, under clause 1(b), is "to give Ontario's employers, workers and potential workers"—and that's what most of the people I represent are, potential workers—"access to publicly funded labour force development programs and services." So it's a dilemma. While we have a need, we don't see any solution for its being resolved.

I recommend to this committee that the portions of the act I have quoted from be amended to read, "To ensure access and equity in labour force development programs and services"—remove the words "to seek"—and "To identify and eliminate systemic and other discriminatory barriers," and "To ensure that the special needs of people with disabilities are accommodated."

I'm not saying that OTAB should assume responsibility for all the accommodation needs I have identified. OTAB must provide the leadership needed to get other ministries of government and institutions to assume responsibility for their fair share. Some ministry needs to take the need. My suggestion is, why not OTAB?

Our steering committee was able to convince the OTAB project that an alternate was needed for any OTAB director who has a disability. We see this as a form of accommodation. However, it is not enough that this alternate simply replace the person when he is attending meetings. I should bring to your attention that I am the nominee for persons with disabilities on the OTAB steering committee, and that's why it reads, "When I am unable to attend the meetings." That alternate should attend all orientation and regular meetings in order to be informed and able to replace the representative, if that becomes necessary. Members of our steering committee do not have the expertise and background in training issues that other directors and members of the panel would have. We need access by as many people as possible within our constituency to this kind of information.

I do not want to be the token person with a disability on OTAB. I must frequently force myself from thinking that way. I read some of the debates in Hansard after the second reading of Bill 96, and it appears that a lot of people are upset that community industrial training committees, or CITCs, will disappear and be replaced by local boards. I note that Dianne Cunningham said: "We don't need to reinvent the wheel. If something's working, let's just build on it. If it's not broken, don't fix it." I heard that statement repeated frequently while serving on the local board's panel.

I welcome this change. I never knew that CITCs existed until I served on the local board's consultation panel. Why? Because people with disabilities are not normally targeted for the training that CITCs fund. I asked nearly a dozen people who work in employment programs for people with disabilities whether they had ever used CIRC funds. They'd never heard of CITCs. Why? Because people with jobs or people who recently lost jobs get most of the money that flows through CITCs.

CITCs provide millions of dollars worth of training to tens of thousands of Ontarians over the years, yet nearly all of the people who have benefited have been either employed or unemployed. Few of the people I represent work

or have ever worked. A recent annual report I received indicates that for 1991-92, the ITC for North York and York region shows that 64% of the students trained were employed, 19% were on UI, 16% were unemployed.

I thank you for your time and welcome your questions and comments.

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, five minutes.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you, Mr Delaney, for your presentation, for appearing before us today. I want to take advantage of the opportunity that presents itself here in that you are a nominee to sit on OTAB. I'm not sure if we've had somebody else here in that capacity to date.

First of all, if you'd tell me a little bit about your nomination process, how your constituency will be able to hold you accountable, how you see it working. Then I want to ask you about this business of a triple majority, whether you'd be in agreement with that. But why don't we start with your nomination, how that works generally.

Mr Delaney: Sure. The steering committee is made up of consumer groups for people with disabilities. That means that these groups are controlled; the majority of the board of directors must be persons with disabilities. We're not using the agency model, where it's people who speak on behalf of disabled persons. All of the groups represented on the steering committee are indeed groups that are made up of persons with disabilities. We do have some people from agencies, but the majority of the people are from community-based groups that provide services or advocacy services for persons with disabilities.

The representatives represent a broad range of disability groups, because one of the problems we had, just like many of the people you've probably heard in terms of representation, was we found it extremely difficult to see how one individual could represent a constituency that's as diverse as ours.

We've got a seat, and yet we still feel that's inadequate. There are many groups that feel they have been left out of this whole process, because if you don't have a seat at the table, you feel that your issues and concerns are not going to be represented. We have groups within our own steering committee that are very unhappy that one individual is going to represent their concerns, because their concerns are very different and specific. "How can I, as a person with one particular disability, have an understanding of what it is like to be disabled with some other kind of disability?"

The steering committee process is, I guess, the best way of ensuring that the interests of the constituency I represent are going to be fairly represented. It gives me an opportunity, where I may not have the knowledge and the background, to go to the people who have that information and seek their advice and ask them for direction, and vice versa, for me to go and report to them on the activities that occur within the OTAB process. That's one part of your question.

Mr McGuinty: Yes. I guess the other thing is this issue of accountability. You've touched on that a little bit, but let's say I have a particular disability. I'm up in Wawa and you're down here in the big city of Toronto, and

you're making decisions and sitting on a board and I don't really think you're putting forward my interests. How do I deal with you? How do I urge you on or how do I hold you accountable?

Mr Delaney: That's one of the unknown pieces of this process that still has to be worked out. I've been involved with the deliberations around the mission statement. There are many unresolved issues. Our steering committee, because of the fast pace—as I indicated, this has been a rushed process. From the perspective of the constituency I represent, the haste with which this process has gone on has made it very difficult for us to keep up, let alone get ahead of the process. We have not had the opportunity to discuss in great detail how that should work, let alone get that information to the people who are making the decisions.

Mrs Marland: Mr Delaney, I would like to congratulate you on your brief this afternoon. Speaking as the critic for people with disabilities for our PC caucus, I have appreciated very much the frankness of what you have said. You may or may not have heard me from time to time speaking in the House about the concerns that I have.

You mentioned the Time For Action report. I'm trying to think of the name of the report before that.

1550

Mr Delaney: Back on Track.

Mrs Marland: And the one that had the word "move" in it? Anyway, I've been here seven years and I've had this portfolio, I think, about five or six, and I have a very real frustration about the fact that we have reports on lots of different subjects to do with people with disabilities, and we now have had a second government for two years, so we've had two different governments in the last seven years. I don't see progress being made.

Now we come to something which in my opinion, with OTAB, is a very real opportunity to make some changes which are essential in the training area in order to perhaps set precedents for opportunities in the work area, in the workplace. I think that where you have addressed the wording, I couldn't agree more, where you say "seek to" and "to ensure," whether in fact that is enough of a commitment and whether in fact we're seeing much change. I think that's the basis.

You addressed the haste with which this has all come about and you talked about being a token member with a disability. Maybe we'll be fortunate enough in these other categories that make up the board to have other people with other disabilities included just by the very fact that they fit into some of the other categories, like educators and trainers and somebody from—heavens, we've got seven from business and seven from labour.

It's always difficult when you see a list where it says one from this and one from that and one from the other, as in this case, women, racial minorities, francophones. Surely to goodness we could develop a board where the people making the appointments would make sure that they're part of that total mix without being flagged. I think it would be great if you were a member on this board, period. You can address all the interests and all the concerns and all

the responsibilities that OTAB will have, regardless of your disability.

Isn't that where we're at? We have such a systemic attitude towards disabilities of any kind that we flag them out there as being something different instead of being the same. We flag somebody who's female, who's franco-phone, who has a disability, and we haven't really come to the point of success of integration in the workplace until we forget those differences and have those people serving on a board because of who they are and not what they are.

I guess, having made that statement, my question for you is—well, first of all let me say I agree with the fact that there have to be two or three of you, more than just you solely representing, as they have, if you are that nominee, the person with disabilities, because I think there would be a tremendous level of frustration for the people with disabilities in this province if we again have another august body that is tokenism.

I'm trying to develop a question, but it's not easy for me because I agree with everything you've said this afternoon.

Mr Gary Wilson: Perhaps I could just ask the question that I felt was on the verge of Mrs Marland's asking, which is, why then has so little progress been made if, as she says, we flag these differences and appear to be aware of them? Just why has so little progress been made? This occurred to me in your presentation, Mr Delaney.

I heard, for instance, on the CITCs, that you'd never heard that they were in existence until you actually were on a board where the subject arose. Then you go on to say that they didn't provide people with disabilities any help anyway, because you felt their main thrust was for people who were recently unemployed or who were looking for work in other circumstances. Why has there been so little progress, in your view, and does not OTAB represent an opportunity, given its consumer-led approach to the needs for training?

Mr Delaney: The reason there is so little progress, I think, is because the issue seems to be so enormous and covers so many waterfronts that anyone who attempts to resolve the problems finds that it's a little bit too big a problem. You cover across just about every ministry within government. If you don't have good transportation, there's no sense in sending people to school or to work. They have to get there and back. There are a number of infrastructures that are all interdependent, and to address each one of them adequately is going to cost a lot of money to do.

Yet, as I suggested in my brief, I don't expect OTAB to expend all the resources that it would take to resolve some of the barriers that I see to the equity we seek through OTAB. Equity, to me, is making sure that more people with disabilities are sitting in classrooms, in apprenticeship programs etc. Yet without the availability of, say, accessible transportation, a lot of people with mobility disabilities aren't going to be able to participate.

In some of your constituencies you don't have parallel transit systems etc. Who's going to do the driving of this person every day becomes very problematic. Who's going to provide the resources for that person to afford to provide his own transportation once he gets a job? People with

disabilities very often end up in entry-level jobs. They don't have the resources, and it goes without saying that if you're disabled in this province you're probably poor. You don't have the resources yourself, and the way the economy is, a lot of the families of people with disabilities don't have the resources. Someone has to provide those resources, and it seems to me the government should.

Maybe you should repeat the second part of your question. I think I lost it.

The Chair: There's one minute left. Mr Wilson, you can use it or you can let Mr Wiseman use it.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, Mr Wiseman has a question.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mr Wiseman: Also part of the problem is the inherent attitude among employers in our society that if you're disabled, somehow or other you are dysfunctional in all ways and can't do any kind of job.

Mr Delaney: That's right.

Mr Wiseman: I think that's deplorable.

Mr Delaney: That's why we need an employment equity bill. I see these two pieces of legislation, the Employment Equity Act and the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, being complementary. There aren't very many people out there now who are job-ready who could follow that stream through employment equity and make it. Pretty soon employers would be saying, "I'm not hiring people with disabilities because I'm not getting any qualified ones."

We don't expect anyone to be hired who doesn't have the skills and the knowledge to do the job, yet if we don't have a training system that is set up to provide those people with the knowledge and skills, then that whole piece of legislation is going to be meaningless.

Mr Wiseman: But it does take a little bit of flexibility on the part of employers to be very clear about the talent they're looking for.

Mr Delaney: Definitely.

Mr Wiseman: For example, I've hired somebody in my office who is deaf. That person doesn't answer the phone; other people answer the phone.

Mr Delaney: With a telecommunications device for the deaf, he or she can answer the phone.

The Chair: Mr Delaney, the committee expresses its gratitude to you for your attendance here, your interest, your participation in this process and your insights. You've made a valuable contribution. You've obviously provoked a lot of thought on the part of all the committee members. That's clear from the types of exchanges you've had with them. We're hoping you will keep in touch. Take care.

1600

ONTARIO BUSINESS COLLEGE

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Business College. Will those people please come forward, have a seat and tell us their names and titles, if any. Your written submission has become part of the record as a result of having been filed as an exhibit. We've got 30 minutes. Please try to save at least the second 15 minutes for exchanges and questions.

Ms Nancy Morgan: I guarantee I won't take 15 minutes of your time this afternoon.

The Chair: No, you're going to take 30 minutes of our time. Whether you take 10 minutes or 15 minutes of it before your submission is up to you.

Ms Morgan: I've still got half an hour in total?

The Chair: You better believe it.

Ms Morgan: Thank you on behalf of Ontario Business College for the opportunity to address the issues in Bill 96 which we see might impact our ability to continue to offer quality post-secondary education and training.

Ontario Business College was established in Belleville in 1868 to provide a facility at which the public could acquire skills to enable them to find employment in the business world. Students from all parts of Ontario have enrolled at one of our eight locations across the province. Approximately 1,200 men and women are currently attending our colleges. The campus deans continue to play an important role in local training development, and currently each is actively participating in the OTAB process in their communities.

My name is Nancy Morgan and I come to you today wearing many hats. I am a dairy farmer's daughter from the Quinte area and a member of Kiwanis International. I sit on the Belleville Chamber of Commerce education committee, attend local labour adjustment board meetings and am also a member of the area 4 LTAB steering committee, but most importantly, I am a dean with Canada's oldest private vocational college.

As dean of the Belleville campus, I would like to commend the Ontario government for undertaking Bill 96. It is very evident that if Canada's labour force is not highly skilled, our country's economic future is uncertain at best.

For the last 125 years, Ontario Business College has been training people so they may become better equipped to enter or re-enter the labour market. We currently provide a wide range of programs including accounting, business administration, numerous secretarial programs, animal and child care, computer, dental, pharmacy, law clerk, law and security, travel, and our newest program, human services.

The majority of our students are female, over the age of 35. Many are sole-support parents who need to stay close to home to obtain their training and some have attended public educational institutions before. Ontario Business College, as a training partner, is able to offer these students the type of education that fits their needs: diploma programs that are completed in 6 to 12 months, minimizing their income loss; small class sizes that offer increased instructor attention, which most mature students need to be successful, and a class schedule that allows them to work if necessary while attending college. So you see, ladies and gentlemen, over the years Ontario Business College has developed an educational system with the approval of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities that has trained thousands of people for a better life.

As a member of the training partners in area 4, it has been interesting to see things develop over the past months

since the OTAB concept was first introduced. I have witnessed all facets of labour market partners come together for a common purpose. Ontario Business College has always been a part of the process and we will continue to help in any way we can because of the need for the type of training we provide. Everyone should have the option to choose the most appropriate training for their individual needs, whether it be via public or private trainers.

Just before the students leave our college, we spend some time with each one individually, to make sure everything is okay. When asked what they like best about our college, there are a few responses that are heard repeatedly: "I enjoyed meeting new people who became new friends," "The staff members are all so friendly and helpful," "I have gained a lot of self-confidence," and "I am glad I've been given the opportunity to learn." We also receive numerous calls from local employers wanting to know if we have any graduates they could hire, because they know our students are job-ready. All of these situations reaffirm in my mind that the community and our students are happy with what and how we do things at Ontario Business College.

In my opening paragraph, I mentioned some issues I would like to address. I know it's getting late in the afternoon and I do not want to take up much of your time, so I would like to become a bit direct.

There are two main issues that concern private trainers about Bill 96, the first being section 16. I hope the government does not intend to disallow private training partners from taking part in and providing training for the people this process is aimed at helping. These people, mature students with outdated skills who have been out of an educational facility for a number of years and who need a lot of one-on-one instruction, are the types of students who attend our college every day. Ontario Business College has spent years helping just this type of individual, developing an expertise in dealing with these people and fulfilling their retraining needs. If you are going to make training accessible to everyone, let everyone have a choice of trainers.

Second, I hope the government recognizes the importance of letting the LTABs in each area decide what type of training is needed in their area. In area 4 we have a rather diverse population structure, but we have put together a steering committee that we feel represents the majority of the population. However, as someone who works in South Hastings, I would not feel confident in judging what type of training is required in North Hastings, nor would I even begin to guess what would be required in the city of Toronto. I must admit I am not one for buzzwords, but I feel a grass-roots approach to training is the only way a system such as OTAB can realize its potential.

Every one of the deans at an Ontario Business College campus is involved in community training plans, for example, local community industrial training committees, Canada employment centres, labour adjustment board training and even training that is requested by local business. Although the provincial government can perhaps help steer us in the same direction as global training is going in order that our workers can compete with the rest

of the world, I do feel LTAB should have control over local destiny.

I hope my time with you will reinforce the message that private vocational schools are an important partner in our education and training system and one of the choices Ontario students should have when seeking employment skills.

Thank you. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

The Chair: Thank you. Ms Marland, please.

Mrs Marland: I do not have any questions, Mr Chair.
1610

The Chair: Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you for your presentation. I certainly enjoyed it. It's always nice to welcome somebody from our neighbourhood. I'm from Kingston. I represent Kingston and the Islands. We had people from the Belleville District Chamber of Commerce here this morning as well, so our area is being well represented. I think that's part of the function, not only of these committees but also of organizations like OTAB, that they represent the province and the individual regions, which touches on one of the questions I have for you.

It has to do with the grass-roots approach that you suggest is an important feature of the OTAB model with the local boards. In bringing this up, you say, "I would not feel confident judging what type of training is required in north Hastings, nor would I even begin to guess what would be required in the city of Toronto."

I'm just wondering about that. That highlights it, doesn't it, at least in my mind, the need for some overarching or umbrella group like OTAB to work in conjunction with the local boards. I'd like your comment on that; in other words, to give the kind of overview that would be needed from a provincial aspect.

Ms Morgan: If I interpret your question correctly, I think there really is a need for OTAB, most definitely. The work they're doing is, as I say, an incredible asset to the entire country. But I feel—and if I'm on the wrong track, please let me know—

Mr Gary Wilson: It sounds very good.

Ms Morgan: I think it's important that local areas develop with the assistance of OTAB a very—what am I trying to say? They need to be guided, yes, so that the workers they train or who are trained in this new system, come out with skills that will help the country as a whole and the province as a whole.

But I think you also have to realize—and I'm sure you do or the committee does—that the people of the Quinte area, which is what I will call area 4, have unique needs, are unique people. Even between the northern and the southern portions of area 4, you have a very diverse population structure, a very diverse economic structure. You have mining and lumbering in the north and agriculture and manufacturing trades in the south.

I think it's important that decisions on training—how to train, what to train at a basic level—come from that grass-roots approach.

Mr Gary Wilson: Have you found, in discussing these through your local steering committee, that you've discovered new interests or areas of common concern, say, in areas you didn't know existed before, just through coming together?

Ms Morgan: Yes. We actually had a steering committee meeting last night and most of the committee members agreed there is such a diversification in the Quinte area and in area 4 that there is a unique concern even that everyone's going to be represented. As the gentlemen before me was saying, how does one person actually represent the different types of disabilities? How does one person or a few people even represent area 4?

Mr Gary Wilson: You can say, how does an MPP represent a riding?

Ms Morgan: With a lot of help.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly.

Ms Morgan: Sorry.

Mr Gary Wilson: I was just saying, we understand that concern with representation, because it is an obvious part of this, the model that people have to speak for other people because, obviously, everybody can't be represented directly in that sense.

I guess you know that the model suggests the public interest be uppermost in the representative's mind, so there is the necessity, say, or the obligation to keep in mind what the government of the day's economic and social policies are, so that the decisions that are made tie into that. But again, that's always in conjunction with what's happening at the local level, so that we have the kind of response through the councils and the reference groups part of OTAB and then also the local boards feeding into that.

It comes back to that kind of discussion, I think, and even though it might appear a bit—well, people are unfamiliar with exactly how it works over time. We've even discussed with people here that people have, in coming together, found commonality of interest through their discussions, and we think this will develop. So I was wondering, from your point of view, whether you think this might happen as well.

Ms Morgan: It is a possibility, most definitely. Out of the local steering committee we have developed, we are trying now to decide whether we will take area 4 and divide it into smaller, more representable areas and then work from there together, or whether we will go on an interest basis: agricultural representatives getting together and funnelling back through to their steering committee. That definitely will bring out the majority of people; you will find common interests and common concerns, most definitely.

Mr Gary Wilson: I was wondering, at your college, how you determine what your students are thinking about the courses they're taking at your college. Do you have a student council, for instance, or any other kinds of meetings with the students through the period they're at the college, to see what they're doing and what their opinion of your course is?

Ms Morgan: At my campus, the Belleville campus, I have 150 students. I must admit that over the time they are with me, I usually get to know them on a first-name basis. I have a very open-door policy, so if they have any concerns, they have the ability to come to an actual staff member, or we have a student adviser. They're mature people, so if they have a concern, they don't have any problem at all voicing that concern. So it's through open-door policies, a student adviser; we also have general assemblies all the time. It's a very open concept in education. If they have a concern, as I say, they don't have a problem raising it.

Mr Gary Wilson: I asked that partly because, as you know, this is a consumer-driven model, where the people who actually are going to benefit from the training and who see the need for the training will be sharing the responsibility with the government in designing the courses and the training that are needed. It seems from what you said that you think this is certainly a feasible way of approaching it, that people are capable of making those decisions through their experience in identifying their needs.

Ms Morgan: The majority of our students come to us through referral: friends, family, relatives, things like that. We also have an extensive evaluation process. We have the students do what we call classroom evaluation, where they comment on their teacher. We also do an evaluation that we call a marketing survey, in which they evaluate the administrative staff and the campus facilities. We are also a member of OACE, the Ontario Association for Continuing Education, and it yearly send out surveys to collect information results. So if anything comes up in those surveys that says, perhaps, "There's a hole in the roof and you really should fix it"—that's a bizarre example, but they're brought out in those surveys.

Mr Gary Wilson: Of course, your organization too suggests another model: You have an umbrella group looking at all the colleges, which I suppose have different clientele and different interests, yet are seeing some uniformity and can deal with them on that level. Thank you very much.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I think you've brought forward again an important aspect of the role you have in terms of training and adjustment and retraining in the province.

The question I have is based on a previous presentation, from OPSEU, and I would like to get your thoughts on this. On page 3 they say, "We fear that the private training sector views OTAB as a source of large sums of previously unavailable money and is eager to have the legislation turn over the keys to the treasury." What is your reaction to that?

Ms Morgan: My initial reaction? A little bit of resentment, to be honest with you.

Mr Offer: I understand that.

Ms Morgan: The Ontario Business College, as I said in my brief, has always been a part of area training. I currently have a computer program running for Canada Employment right now. We've run contracts for the local CITCs; we'll continue to do that. We've had local businesses approach us to provide training for them.

It confuses me and I get very resentful. We have a clientele at our college. We've spent years developing a system of education that works well for the type of people who are going to need this type of training. I guess bottom line, that's it.

Mr Offer: I can't imagine that there is a member in the Legislature who isn't aware of the important contribution made by the private sector in the area of training and that this bill should not, wittingly or otherwise, create a competition or some kind of preference for one over the other; that there is the opportunity for partnership and for growing and working together.

I have concerns that the legislation, in terms of its objects, does not embrace the partnership but rather is, without question in my opinion, creating a preference which I do not think will bode well for groups and organizations such as yourselves and the workers and future workers of this province.

Ms Morgan: Interesting insight, because I think at a very local level, this bill has, if anything, brought trainers together. As I say, I sit beside people from Loyalist College, and their actual words, when we started building the steering committee, were, "Nancy, you have to be there with us." That was from a gentleman from Loyalist College. I don't perceive them as competition, because what they do they do well and, by all means, they should continue doing it. I feel the same type of respect is given to Ontario Business College by Loyalist College. There are people we can, because of our expertise, train perhaps not better but train just as adequately.

Mr Offer: This is not necessarily a question but rather a comment. I believe the legislation has to be changed in order to embrace in words your attitudes in terms of partnership and cooperation. I don't believe it does that now. I think it can do it, and only time will tell if there are going to be significant changes to the legislation. Thank you very much.

The Chair: You've spent a considerable amount of time here, and obviously your comments by way of your submission provoked some interest on the part of the members of this committee. It's important that you and others like you feel comfortable coming to this and similar types of committees to share your views. It's a significant role in the production of good legislation, and this committee is grateful to you for taking the time, for having the interest and for travelling here to Toronto to make your presentation today.

I expect you'll be following this legislation as it goes through committee into clause-by-clause around mid-February, and I trust that you'll be following it then into the Legislature. We invite you to keep in touch.

Ms Morgan: Thank you. It's been most enjoyable.

The Chair: The Durham Region Action Committee for Training is the next participant. We are going to recess until 4:35.

The committee recessed at 1624 and resumed at 1636.

DURHAM REGION
ACTION COMMITTEE FOR TRAINING

The Chair: The next participant is the Durham Region Action Committee for Training. Please come forward, have a seat, tell us your names, your positions, if you wish. We have your written submission, which will form part of the record by virtue of being filed as an exhibit. If you want to read it all and not save any time for questions and dialogue, you may, or you may highlight it and engage in a very productive part of the process: exchange with committee members.

Mr Steve Reilly: I'm going to cover it all, but I promise not to go over time.

The Chair: You won't go over time?

Mr Reilly: No, you won't let me. My name is Steve Reilly, and I'm addressing you today as the chairman of the Durham Region Action Committee for Training. We're a volunteer-led, not-for-profit incorporated organization whose mission is to help all organizations in the region of Durham realize the maximum potential of their human resources. We believe the continual upgrading of people's skills will help enhance the competitive position of all sectors, as well as create an environment conducive to the growth of employment within Durham region.

Our organization consists of representatives from business, labour, education and training, both private and public, as well as community service organizations. We strive to accomplish our mandate by: promoting training for business, industry and other sectors; assisting in the identification of present and future training needs; presenting the training needs for employed and unemployed people through government and the education sector; developing and implementing training plans and programs to meet the identified needs; as well as advising government and the education sector on programs and services that should be provided.

We also monitor the quality of and the continuing need for training programs. We provide a coordination and communication service to the region so that organizations and individuals will be aware of and have access to training programs and services. Together with the Ontario Ministry of Skills Development and Employment and Immigration Canada, we develop a human resource plan to address the future needs of the region. We also provide information to the community on careers available within the region and encourage the development of the skills necessary to be successful in those careers.

I realize that's a rather lengthy introduction, but I feel it's important to point out to you that you're receiving a community perspective today on this legislation. You probably feel you've heard all there is to hear on OTAB, so my challenge in the next 15 minutes is to be provocative enough to retain your attention.

We, as well as I'm sure every other group you've listened to, fully support the need for the improvement of the training system in Ontario. Clearly, it is essential that Ontario strive to develop the most effective labour force development system possible if we are to thrive in a competitive global economy. We are concerned, however, that

the government is building new barriers and obstacles rather than providing solutions to our common problems.

I'd like to address two areas of the legislation, if I may: first, the objectives of OTAB; second, the structure.

Bill 96 states that OTAB shall operate in a manner "that is consistent with the economic and social policies, including labour market policies, of the government of Ontario."

How will OTAB link provincial labour force development policies with economic and social policy objectives to local economic and community development strategies?

OTAB will need to be, as Minister Richard Allen has said, "part of a long-term industrial framework for Ontario, designed to encourage a higher-skill, higher-wage economy."

What is the industrial policy framework for Ontario, and has it been shared and promoted to all the labour market partners in the communities of Ontario so that we may be active participants in its implementation?

The legislation also states that OTAB will "seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems."

What exactly does this mean for the private educational and training resources of Ontario? Can the committee assure that the private sector trainers will be given an equal opportunity to compete for the delivery of workplace training in the province, or will OTAB assume the posture of the OFL and all publicly funded training will be delivered through public institutions in Ontario? In our view, freedom to select the most appropriate training provider will best meet the needs of the client, both in quality and cost-effectiveness.

There are no specific objectives listed in the bill that directly link OTAB to Employment and Immigration Canada. Wouldn't a strong relationship make sense given that the EIC is a major provider of funding for workplace training in Ontario? Employment and Immigration is presently preparing the local Canada employment centre offices to play a much greater role in local labour force development. How is this duplication of service to communities being addressed? Presently, the community industrial training committees in Ontario provide training for employed and unemployed people through funds administered from the Canadian Jobs Strategy. Who will be responsible for these federal expenditures under OTAB? Will OTAB be responsible for collecting and assimilating labour market information in addition to the Canada employment centres?

When you ask the different labour market partners today to quote on the effectiveness of the present training system in Ontario, you receive different responses. How will the effectiveness of OTAB be measured? Will its success be measured in terms of numbers of unemployed people finding meaningful work as a result of the training or employed people applying their newly acquired skills to increase their organizations' customer service, quality or productivity, or will the government measure its effectiveness in terms of money spent?

How does the government intend to hold OTAB accountable to the taxpayers of Ontario?

If you accept the fact that 75% of our future employment growth in this province will stem from the prosperity of small employers, and as a national sector they spent approximately \$5.6 billion per year training their employees, according to a survey conducted by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business for the period ending June 1991, how will their voice be recognized through OTAB? As legislators, you must remain cognizant of the fact that this, as well as other workplace legislation, affects the small enterprise in addition to, and often with greater impact than, business and big labour.

This brings me to my second area of concern, the structure. Skills to Meet the Challenge notes that OTAB's governing body will have equal representation from both business and labour. This appears to be a strong move towards promoting partnership among the labour market partners. However, according to Skills to Meet the Challenge, the eight labour representatives will consist of seven nominated by the OFL and one nominated by the Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council. This is not a true representation of the labour sector in Ontario. Clearly, non-OFL-affiliated unions and unorganized labour are discriminated against by this composition. What can be the possible legitimate or logical rationale for this makeup?

Minister Richard Allen, in his presentation to introduce the legislation on November 23, said, "OTAB will play a major role in assisting workers and management to develop partnerships in the area of workforce training and adjustment." What the minister should have said is, "This government will act to ensure that the OFL will play a major role in forming partnerships with management and workers."

Let me quote from a publication delivered at the OFL seminar on training and training boards on January 20, 1992, that describes the OFL's view on management's role in this training system:

"Unless and until employers properly assume their responsibility for training their employees, there will be little governments or training boards can do to provide more than a token amount of training for all employed workers.

"The time for faith in voluntary approaches is over. Employed workers need and deserve adequate training. The trade union movement is convinced this will not happen unless Ontario introduces for all employers an employer training levy. This should be a payroll tax to be used exclusively to fund training for employed workers. The ETL would be used by OTAB to fund approved training plans for employed workers.

"We want to assure there's adequate training for everyone, and this will not be achieved until employers are required to pay their fair share."

Is the time for faith in voluntary approaches over? If you were in business today, does this sound like a partner you would want to work with? With the recent passing of Bill 40 in Ontario, where the business community voiced its opinion loudly and clearly, can anyone say with sincerity that there's any hope of business and the OFL agreeing on anything, let alone something as important as the renewal of our economy by developing a highly skilled,

adaptable workforce able to attract and sustain investment in Ontario?

Ontario has a long history of labour-management confrontation. If we're serious about creating an environment where these two partners can work together on labour force development, then we must take a serious look at this proposed partnership arrangement.

In our opinion, OTAB has to reflect economic, technological, demographic and political realities. The proposed structure seems to be responding to political realities at the expense of others.

There have been many trees destroyed in the last 18 months to enable much to be written about new local boards. The government has invested in a province-wide consultation process to hear the views of 22 communities on OTAB and local boards, yet there are a few brief sentences covering local boards in Bill 96. The bill states that, "OTAB may designate local training and adjustment boards that have been established in accordance with the regulations made under this act." What exactly does "may designate" mean, who will establish local boards and what is the actual time frame?

According to Richard Allen's speech in the House on November 23, 1992, "One of OTAB's first priorities will be to work with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, Employment and Immigration Canada and this government on a local board implementation guide."

On the same day, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board project released the publication Questions and Answers, in which it states, "A (local board) implementation guide for use by communities should be available this winter." Given that the final reading of this legislation is not expected till this spring, which means the governing body of OTAB will not realistically begin to become effective until September, who is actually developing the implementation guide for local boards? The communication linkages and responsibilities between OTAB and local boards need clarification. Can communities in Ontario expect reciprocal obligations between OTAB and local boards?

A great deal of attention has been paid to the balance of power in the leadership of OTAB. But what steps will be taken to ensure a high quality of leadership throughout the system? How will total quality management principles be applied to ensure continuous improvements in the system?

What criteria is the government asking each of the labour market partners to apply to its selection of members to OTAB, apart from participation from equity groups? What are the actual skill requirements?

It may take several years to fully establish this new system. Major reforms often lead to short-term disruptions in service and delivery quality. This will be a critical time for Ontario's labour force and economy. We simply cannot afford to fall backward in any of our current training initiatives while the new system takes hold. Can the government ensure that our current labour force development systems and programs do not decline during the process of change?

Will the time gap between planning and implementation of local training increase from the present six to eight months, or will it decrease?

The government can ensure continuity of service in Ontario's communities in two ways: First, send a very clear message to current providers of service, both employees and volunteers, that there will be a phased-in approach to implementing this new system and that their expertise is absolutely necessary to ensure that this transition is as smooth as possible. Secondly, do not implement any changes to the local structure until we are all assured that OTAB has had sufficient time to complete its learning curve and is beginning to function as it is designed.

One issue that has been ignored in all the government publications regarding OTAB to date has been the issue of cost. The public has the right to ask for an estimate of cost to implement this new training system, yet no estimates have been published. Can the taxpayers of Ontario afford the cost of this new system in today's economy?

How is the movement of 700 Ontario government employees to OTAB going to reduce the level of bureaucracy and duplication? What will happen to the OTAB project team once the governing body of OTAB is established?

Where is the thorough analysis identifying the weaknesses of the current system? The 2,500 volunteers in the provincial network of community industrial training committees were never asked to identify areas of improvement in the existing structure before the decision was made to change it. Now the province seems determined to throw out the baby with the bathwater.

The effectiveness of any training system in Ontario will depend on the effectiveness at the local level. The public's perception of OTAB's success will depend on the performance at the local level. This system appears to be a centralized, top-down solution, not a system that truly involves all key stakeholders at the local level.

Who will have real control over policy and financial decisions? Will it ultimately be led by "those who need and use its services," as Richard Allen has put it, or will it be led by political appointees, bureaucrats and employees of provincial organizations?

We recognize there are many weaknesses in the current system in Ontario. We are excited about the challenges that face us in the future. We're also looking forward to applying our energy in a constructive way to improve our service to our community.

You've now heard from one community organization that is deeply concerned for the future welfare of its neighbours, concerned enough to point out one more time what you've surely heard over and over again. When will you take the voice of communities in Ontario seriously? Your job is to ensure that this legislation takes a positive leap forward in human resource development in Ontario. We hope you've taken us seriously. Our children's future may depend upon it.

1650

Mr Sutherland: I'm going to try to answer some of the questions you've raised, and you've raised quite a few.

Mr Reilly: Terrific.

Mr Sutherland: One, you talked about the industrial policy framework. A discussion paper on that was released last August by the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Technol-

ogy. If you haven't received a copy, I'm sure you can receive copies from your local MPP's office.

The Chair: Hold it. Perhaps we could arrange right now for the clerk to facilitate that.

Mr Reilly: That would be terrific.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland will talk to the clerk at 6 o'clock.

Mr Sutherland: Sure, okay. You also talked about the scope of "seek to ensure...the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems." You left out section 15 of the objects, which is complementary to that, which says the "diverse...training resources." You talked about how it links with Employment and Immigration Canada. Richard Allen, in his speech, said that it will link, and it is through those links that the local boards are going to be set up and the voices of the communities will be heard, because there will be local people on those boards.

I'm not sure about how the labour market information base is going to be established, but I'm sure it will use some of the federal stuff.

You also talked about the role of small business. Of course, as you know, CFIB was involved with the business steering committee. It chose, for its own reasons, to withdraw from active participation in the steering committee, although I understand there's still some involvement from it.

You talked about whether business and labour can work together, given the experience of Bill 40 and the history of labour confrontation. There are OFL affiliates, members of OFL and its management and its employers, that are already involved in training projects. United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1977 at Zehrs market in Kitchener is one example of just a terrific training system that they worked jointly on. Actually, the interesting thing is that since they've worked on training, their labour-management relations have improved dramatically.

Mr Reilly: Starting sectorally now, at the sector level?

Mr Sutherland: Yes, that's specifically with their employers. So I'm optimistic that when it comes down to it, everybody recognizes the need and that that will occur.

You also mentioned about "may designate local boards." Again, that's being negotiated jointly with the federal government, so we couldn't put in all the aspects of how local boards are going to operate, what their specific mandates are. That has to be negotiated. OTAB is going to be one of the partners, along with the government, negotiating that with the federal government and Employment and Immigration Canada.

I think you've raised a lot of questions that a lot of other people have, and I'm glad that you have, but I do think the processes are there, hopefully, to address them. Hopefully, in the long run we will achieve what all of us want to achieve, which is a very good training system for everyone that will achieve economic goals, competitiveness goals and issues that are more defined as equity goals, social justice goals.

I think OTAB can do both of them. In the long run, you're quite right: The LTABs will play an important role

in meeting community needs and will play a very effective role.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks for your presentation, Mr Reilly. You said that you'd be provocative, and I think you carried that out successfully.

Mr Reilly: Thank you.

Mr Gary Wilson: My colleague has gone over some of the issues, and I think that you can be a little less provocative perhaps by incorporating those. But I just want to ask you about your local CITC. You imply that you have a community perspective.

Mr Reilly: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: Would you say that's true?

Mr Reilly: I would say that's true.

Mr Gary Wilson: What I find peculiar is in your approach to the section that you quoted from the OFL seminar, which was back over a year ago now. You highlight aspects of it that have, I guess, been raised at this committee. From a local point of view, though, you seem to discount their concern about the training needs of their workers and their members. Also, of course, you mentioned Bill 40 in a way that sounded less than supportive. I wonder how that kind of attitude translates on to the local community and how then you interact and cooperate with this major labour market partner.

Mr Reilly: There's no disagreement between, let's say, the business community or our community and the OFL that training is necessary, and training for its members as well. Where we come into disagreement is how that training will be carried out and the structure around that. The disagreement we had with the OFL was around its idea of what this structure should look like: to me, its top-down approach to its appointments to local boards and its view of ensuring that only the publicly funded institutions should receive public money. There are aspects of their training agenda that, of course, anybody who agrees in economic renewal would agree with. It's just their methods of coming to that objective that we disagree with.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm a bit concerned that it would take the emphasis; that is, the need for an economic renewal through better training. I just wonder how that can be promoted at, say, the local level, in your experience.

Mr Reilly: If we allow local people, for example, to participate in local planning and to have ability to enact on that planning, then we will be effective. If we follow the OFL's model, we will not be effective. If they are judging, from Toronto, who should sit on the local board, for example, in Kirkland Lake, which is all we've seen so far. We haven't seen anything to the contrary. When the OFL—

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm sorry. I don't understand that. What do you mean? You've actually seen somebody appointed in Kirkland Lake—

Mr Reilly: No. What I'm saying is that they are against a local nomination process. They want a centralized nomination process, even to the point that the OFL has sent letters out to the district labour councils asking them not to participate in community meetings, because

OTAB will take care of that for them; they don't need to do that themselves.

Mr Gary Wilson: But after all, as I think you've even noted in your presentation, they are only one partner in this endeavour. There are several others in this exercise who share responsibility between government and the labour market partners—

Mr Reilly: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: —so I think you place too great an emphasis on the views of one of the partners in its own internal discussions, and take that out of context.

Mr Reilly: Well, I wouldn't if they didn't have so much power in OTAB.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I say, that's not been the experience to this point. It certainly is, especially from what we've heard in the hearings to this point, a very cooperative undertaking that has existed and I think has provided the foundation. As I say, that has certainly worked at the OTAB level. Several of the people who have come here to talk from their community experience say that where everyone is treated equally, they get a lot of cooperation and a lot of discussion on the issues that count as far as training goes.

Again, I'm not sure that by emphasizing the things you have done will provide the best basis for cooperation, and I just wonder how you get past that.

Mr Reilly: We have labour involved in our community planning process, but every time we talk to the OFL it's a stumbling block. They will not participate. They will refuse to participate. I don't know about you, but that to me doesn't indicate that they are—

Mr Gary Wilson: All I'm suggesting is that it does work in other communities.

Mr Reilly: That may be true, but I'm talking from our community perspective.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay. So wouldn't you think this is one of the—sorry, did you want a question, Jim?

Mr Wiseman: Yes, I did.

Mr Gary Wilson: Sorry, go ahead.

The Vice-Chair: You're out of time, gentlemen, so you'd better let the witness respond and we'll move on.

Mr Gary Wilson: So that's one of the advantages of OTAB, to bring all this experience together so that other communities that work very well can offer suggestions to communities where it mightn't be working so well.

1700

Mr McGuinty: Thank you, sir, for your presentation. I get the impression—and I sincerely hope I'm wrong—that we're setting ourselves up here for a big fall. The way I see this process is that the government is turning over what is properly a government responsibility to distinct groups in society and saddling them with a special task, which is darned hard enough for government to accomplish, which is to ensure that the public interest reins supreme.

First of all, we've begun by eliminating, I guess, representation of two thirds of Ontario's workforce. We've heard from the public school representatives this afternoon, who

are providing education-training to over one million adults in the province at the present time, that they will not formally be represented on the board. I have grave concerns about its success. I hope I'm proven wrong. I wish I shared the confidence shared by the government members in this venture.

Something that concerns me is this issue of accountability, or lack of it. I know you expressed a concern about that, but can you—I'm not even sure how to formulate the question here. How are we going to hold the government accountable? How are we going to hold OTAB accountable for the measures it undertakes?

Mr Reilly: The criteria better be set at the outset rather than forming the structure first and then deciding how you're going to measure it. What you're asking for is a crown corporation. Once it's in place, how are you then going to decide what your performance criteria are going to be? There had better be a lot of thought right now, up front, in deciding how that's going to be measured.

I can tell you that at the local level it's damned difficult. It's difficult when I take federal expenses and spend them on training for employed and unemployed people. How do I measure the effectiveness of those dollars? The only way I know of that the government measures it is: Did you expend your budget? Are you on budget? Did you spend it on time? That's been the performance measure, instead of, as I suggested, trying to define whether the clients' needs were actually met, the needs of the individual and the needs of business in that community. How are you going to decide whether they are being met?

That's probably only one aspect in a very large scope in dealing with OTAB. I know it's a difficult question to answer and I don't have a clear-cut answer, but from what I've seen in the legislation, it's not provided there, either.

Mr McGuinty: You also touch on this issue of the system appearing to be a centralized, top-down solution. I think it's time to get away from this bureaucratic model that I think we picked up from the Americans in the early 1900s, who were very concerned with the problems of patronage and corruption in the government. They said, "Okay, we're going to give all discretionary decision-making to the people at the top only," and they adopted that model wholeheartedly. So we've eliminated the corruption, by and large, but we've told all the people down at the bottom three things: one, you're stupid; two, we don't trust you; and three, just do as you're told. So we fail to—

Mr Kormos: Sounds like caucus, Mr McGuinty.

Mr McGuinty: Yes, that's a good point. The point is that we haven't been able to and we failed to capitalize on the strengths of the people, obviously, at the community level, and that is an absolutely essential element to my way of thinking. If we can't do that, if we can't ensure that the people at the local level make the decisions that affect them, then it just has no possible chance of succeeding.

Mr Reilly: You have absolute agreement with me. How is it going to work unless you do that? Yes.

The Chair: The committee indeed expresses its gratitude to the Durham Region Action Committee for Training and you, Mr Reilly, for travelling here this evening to

make the views of that committee known to this committee. We appreciate the interest of you and your colleagues, and your eagerness to participate and assist. I trust you'll be following this legislation as it goes through this committee process and then into the Legislature. We ask you to please keep in touch. If you have any further comments, any member of this committee would be pleased to hear from you. Thank you kindly. Have a safe trip back home.

CANADIAN HEARING SOCIETY

The Chair: The next participant is the Canadian Hearing Society. Would those people please come forward, have a seat and tell us who they are, their names, and any positions that they hold. You've got 30 minutes. Please try to save at least the second 15 minutes for questions and exchanges.

Mr Jim Hardman: First of all, I'd like to introduce myself. If you don't mind, I'd prefer to stand. It's easier for me to communicate through sign language. My name is Jim Hardman and I work at the Canadian Hearing Society as director. My colleague is Donald Prong, one of the CHS staff. I'll be speaking for about eight minutes and then he'll be speaking for about seven minutes of his experience as a vocational rehab client.

I've come to discuss two things with you. First of all, I would like to discuss accommodation and accessibility. In terms of the disabled group in representing the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, there really is no representation. It's really a one-time thing. We provide access to disabled people in providing a wheelchair ramp and different things like that. However, a deaf and hard-of-hearing person—when I walked into the room today, I would be disabled unless I had a form of communication in terms of an interpreter.

OTAB needs to recognize that we need to be providing continual funding for interpreters, which includes training dollars and providing that kind of service to the community. In discussing the accessibility issue, we need to recognize that training deaf and hard-of-hearing people is different than training other disabled groups.

We have colleges and universities in Ontario. However, they cannot meet the needs of the deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals because they don't offer adequate education for deaf people. For example, most deaf people who graduate from institutions often have a grade 3 reading level and their mathematics level is very low. We need to recognize that. In training, such as improving English skills, math skills, preschool training and preparation for college and university—at the same time we need to provide accessibility—environmental issues are involved, providing, for example, an FM system for a deaf individual.

We can provide that service, but if there are other things that happen in the room that we need to provide for in terms of rights and so forth, we need to have accessibility to rooms and into the environment and so forth.

One thing I'd like to do is discuss the role of the Canadian Hearing Society in terms of specialized training for the deaf and hard of hearing and giving them that kind of training and providing that. For example, I know of one program that's been established, the Canadian Hearing Society

equity training program, which is a program provided by management for the deaf and hard of hearing. I am a graduate of that program.

In terms of going through York University, if you wanted to go there you would have to have an interpreter there, and the NDP needs to recognize that. With employment equity, we need to recognize that for many people who are involved in the workforce, there aren't enough interpreters out there. There isn't government support for apprenticeship programs for interpreters. At the same time, deaf and hard-of-hearing individuals need to be involved in the committees for OTAB and so forth so that we can continue to offer this kind of opportunity for deaf individuals in OTAB.

Often we see that training programs are provided accessibility but we have to fight for it. For example, if we were to go to university, we would go in and meet with the disability office, the special needs office. They can't communicate with me, so what do I do? I have to book an interpreter, take the interpreter with me, and maybe one or two weeks later—school's already started—find an interpreter. School may have already begun a month ago and I will have missed a month of school. In terms of the accessibility issue, we need to be providing for that prior to school starting.

Now I'd like to turn the floor over to Donald Prong to explain his issues.

Mr Donald Prong: Thank you. Hello. A few years ago I joined vocational rehab as a client and now I'm a vocational rehabilitation counsellor at the Canadian Hearing Society. I'd like to explain my experience.

I grew up in a small town in southern Ontario. My neighbour had a boy who was the same age and we played together. He was my playmate. We grew up together. When it came to finishing high school, he decided to go to university nearby. I really envied that, because the peer pressure was so strong. I wished I could have done that. He influenced me and I thought, gee, I'd like to go to that university.

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However, that university wasn't accessible to me because it didn't have the courses I wanted. I wanted to go and advance my education. I looked into Gallaudet University in Washington, DC, and I thought about the cost of flying there. The tuition is very high because it's the only one in the world that's accessible to the deaf and hard of hearing. And the American money—of course the exchange is higher than Canadian.

So I went to the ARC to help me. They helped me get through and they encouraged me and fully funded me. I went to Gallaudet; it was a terrific experience. The reason was because the teachers spoke in sign language. If I went to a hearing university there weren't interpreters, and that was harder for me. Gallaudet supported me in that sense. If I didn't have vocational rehabilitation support, maybe I would have been sitting at home and collecting welfare. But instead you supported me and so now I'm supporting you. I pay taxes. I pay a lot of taxes. I think this is a good investment.

In general, I'm a VR counsellor and I go to different meetings. Sometimes they're dry meetings; sometimes they're terrific meetings. I went to one meeting last spring that was very interesting. There were a lot of people from all over Toronto, all VR counsellors who came. There was one man who was speaking. He was a financial analyst himself. He had analysed the different local offices, north-east, northwest and southwest local offices and so forth. The Canadian Hearing Society itself fell under the southwest local office.

This man said that the success rate after a client received full vocational rehabilitation—they collected information on who had the highest salary. It was the southwest. I was in the back and I thought to myself, why? Because CHS is there, that's why. They're helping the deaf community to advance.

Now, about accessibility, that's difficult. VR helps there. For example, York University recently set up a teachers' college in preparation for teaching deaf children. They set that up two years ago. It looked great. Then, when they started talking about interpreters and who was going to pay for that, the Ministry of Colleges and Universities wasn't going to pay for that. Who was going to pay? VR paid. VR really benefited a lot there. I think OTAB needs to notice that and recognize that service. Thank you.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I have a question dealing with why you would want your very valid and important issues left to OTAB, to a group of individuals who don't have a direct link of accountability to government. Don't you believe that the issues you've brought forward today are ones that should be addressed by government and not left to a board such as OTAB?

Mr Hardman: I think OTAB is partly accountable for setting up apprenticeship programs, and part of that is accessibility to the community. Who's going to pay for interpreters? Who's going to provide that accessibility? Where will we get that? If no one takes responsibility, then how will my people get training? Where will we get our training?

Mr Offer: My question is based exactly on responsibility, and maybe the issues that you've brought forward are directly the responsibility of government and maybe should not be left to boards such as OTAB, but rather the issues that you bring forward are of such a broad and important nature that governments should have the responsibility and you should have the opportunity to complain to governments if they don't act.

Mr Prong: Really, up until now, we've never received straight, clear information about OTAB. That's why we're here. We want to know who's responsible. That's why we're here. I'm asking you, do you think it's the government? I thank you for that answer.

However, I think OTAB needs to be taking some responsibility, perhaps half-half, because OTAB seems to be focusing on the disabled group. We are the disabled group. We are disabled in terms of communication issues. Really, the information has been very vague. I'm hoping in a few days, a few weeks, a few months, a few years, we find some clear information as to who is accountable.

Mr Hardman: Just adding to his point, perhaps OTAB isn't responsible; the government says it's not responsible. Then who's responsible? Who's accountable? OTAB has a role to enforce that the government provides accessibility issues to the deaf and hard-of-hearing community, that's all. Maybe that needs to be included in your guidelines, offering the dollars and paying for the costs of the accessibility services. If OTAB says that's not its responsibility, then the government will say it's not its responsibility either. There's no promise there.

Mr Offer: When it all comes down, I share that concern. I believe it is the responsibility of governments to deal with the issues that you've brought forward. There should not be the opportunity for a government to say, "No, it's the responsibility of OTAB," and for OTAB to say "No, it's the responsibility of government." As a result, as you know, the issue is never addressed.

My concern is that if the responsibility be with government, it rests with government, and it should not be possible to use this legislation as a way of dealing off some of the responsibilities the government as a whole should address.

Mr Hardman: I'd like to give you an example of the interpreter apprenticeship program in Ontario, where our interpreters are scarce. The government does provide funds to the Canadian Hearing Society. However, the programs are cut. The funds are cut. The government won't take accountability. We need more qualified interpreters. Where can we train them?

Mr Offer: All I can do is say that I think the points you've brought forward are very important, and I think they highlight the need for direct accountability and responsibility in the provision of services to all persons. I thank you for your presentation.

Mr Gary Wilson: I too would like to thank you for your presentation. Ever since I've worked with Gary Malkowski, MPP for York East, I've gained more familiarity and more comfort with dealing with interpreters in this kind of process.

Reflecting on the experience of OTAB and the unfamiliarity of some of the labour market partners working with each other, I think it shows that just coming together around the same table will also encourage the same kind of familiarity or at least beginning to see the world in different ways or understanding the various ways people have in encountering the world. I think a very good way of looking at it is that we're all differently abled, that we all have our limited way of looking at the world; it's by coming together that we get a more complete view of it.

I think you would agree that it wasn't just the proposal for OTAB that suddenly deprived communities like yours of services that were, say, plentifully available. It's probably fair to say that governments have not done a good job in the past of providing the kinds of services that you need to play a full role in all aspects of the community.

I say this because my colleague from the opposition suggests that government has the chief responsibility to provide those services, yet the record appears to be that

government hasn't done that good a job. I could pause here to see whether you agree with that.

Mr Hardman: I agree wholeheartedly, yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: It's not in OTAB that we're devolving that responsibility or shuffling it off to some other groups. In fact, the way we're proposing it is to share that responsibility, at least as far as OTAB is concerned, with the labour market partners; that is, the people who are working or who want to be working and who recognize the kind of training and the kind of facilities that they're going to need in the community so that they can get to work to make the decisions to place the resources to make sure that those conditions apply.

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Given that, we have then to get representation. Of course people with disabilities have been participating in their own steering committee as well as the large discussions for the board. There is, I guess you could say, a divergence of viewpoint about who should speak for the people with disabilities, whether it should be the consumers themselves or the service providers such as the Canadian Hearing Society. I was wondering whether you would comment on how this divergence can be accommodated.

Mr Hardman: I think, as service providers, we see what the community wants. We're able to feel out the community, see what kind of training is required and then provide that kind of training to the community that needs it.

Mr Prong: I'd like to add something there. Service providers themselves are consumers as well. For example, the two of us are consumers and service providers. We need an interpreter and we provide the service of interpreters, so often there are conflicting roles or double roles.

Mr Hardman: I'd also like to add something there. The disabled community doesn't often represent the deaf community. The disabled community's accessibility often requires a one-time cost, while the deaf consumer needs ongoing interpreting services, so there are different views. This disabled community often is against VRS, but the deaf community really respects and needs VRS. So there are different viewpoints on representing the deaf community, and I feel that the deaf community needs to be represented on OTAB.

Mr Gary Wilson: I want to say that those of us in politics are used to divergent viewpoints, and through discussions and cooperation, we expect to reach answers that will, I think, generally satisfy everyone. Of course, we have here.

I notice that you said you don't know that much about the OTAB project. I want to say that we will certainly make sure you get the information, the bill itself as well as the supporting documents, to inform you of what's behind this, just so that you will know there is a place here for everyone to participate.

As far as accountability is concerned, it's through the director who will be sitting on the board and then through reference groups that will provide for a wider accountability. There are also community boards that will be set up that again will draw on the experience of everyone.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, as parliamentary assistant, are you going to accept responsibility for getting that information out to these people?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes. I'll make sure that is sent. I just want to say that there is, of course, the general political accountability that will come through MPPs like Gary Malkowski.

Mr Wiseman: I'd like to address a problem from a different perspective, and that is of the employer. Ultimately, the end goal of OTAB is that the deaf community would have workers being placed into the community. As an employer of a person who is deaf, I can at least draw on some of the money available through caucus services and through the government, but an employer in the private sector and in the marketplace would not be able to draw on that and therefore this becomes a real impediment to the employment of deaf people in the private sector if they have no interpreters or anybody to help them communicate.

I'm just wondering if you could help us there in terms of cost, what kinds of assistance could be available, what barriers we have to overcome in order to do that. I find that the person I have employed who is deaf is extremely capable on a wide variety of communication skills, but if I had to pay for an interpreter, I don't think I could do that.

Mr Hardman: Really, that's a complicated issue and it's a human rights issue. It comes down to an employment equity issue. The dollars and who pays for it, I don't know. At the same time—I'm sorry; I've just lost my train of thought.

Mr Wiseman: It's okay. I do that a lot myself.

Mr Hardman: The cost is \$40 an hour or \$200 a day for an interpreter, yes. CHS cannot provide that service for free. Other agencies cannot provide that service for free. Who is responsible for that? That's a good question. Government often covers the cost of that service, and I think it should. I pay my tax dollars. I feel interpreter costs should be included there when I go for a job. I've noticed that some deaf people who have been involved in a job have problems with training on the job. They need training; they need a job coach or something to provide that specialized training, having that coach and going with that person and learning the job. If there's a difficulty in communication, then that needs to be solved. One idea is that employers learn sign language.

Mr Wiseman: I'm having enough trouble just trying to learn French.

The Chair: Thank you, on behalf of the committee, to the Canadian Hearing Society and to both of you for participating in this committee process. It's important that people in the community feel comfortable participating in committee work. Of course, it's equally important, I suppose, that Queen's Park is accessible to people who want to participate in committee work, and the creation of that comfort level is incumbent upon the government that happens to occupy this building at any given point in time.

None the less, the committee is grateful to you. You've provided some interesting and new insights into the impact of OTAB and the effects of this legislation. We trust you will be tracking this bill as it proceeds through committee. The committee will be doing clause-by-clause consider-

ation in the latter part of February coming. That is when any amendments that might be prepared by the respective caucuses will be presented. That will be an opportunity to see how responsive the committee has been, indeed, to the people who appeared before it and made comments and critiques. We invite you to please keep in touch. Thank you, people. Take care.

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TRANSKILLS

The Chair: The next participant is TranSkills. Please have a seat and tell us who you are. We've got your written submission, which becomes a part of the record by virtue of having been filed as an exhibit.

Ms Linda Moore: First of all, I'm not going to read it.

The Chair: Bless you.

Ms Moore: Second, before we get started, I want to thank you, whatever part of the House you sit on, just for toughing it out till 5:30 and all day long. My name is Linda Moore.

The Chair: You're welcome, and we're more than pleased to be here. Some committees actually shut down at 5. For the life of me, I can't understand it.

Mr Wiseman: But will return and go till 10 o'clock.

The Chair: One night a week, after having turned down any number of people who wanted to appear but couldn't because, they were told, the committee was too occupied. I just don't understand it.

Go ahead. You've got a hardworking crew of MPPs here from all three caucuses.

Ms Moore: I represent TranSkills; I'm the CEO of TranSkills. We're a Canadian private, not-for-profit organization from Hamilton-Wentworth that works primarily with small and medium-sized companies to help them look at their future skills needs for which there is no training now and help them to develop it. We also work with labour adjustment in our community, helping to design very innovative and creative kinds of skills training programs. In addition to that, we're very involved in the community development of Hamilton-Wentworth. We're part and parcel of their advisory group on renewing their economic development strategies and their task force on sustainable development.

Although we're quite well versed with the bill, today I really want to concentrate on just highlighting a couple of points that are in our brief. One of them is the principles behind the bill. I'll just touch on a couple of issues and concerns—the rest you can read for yourself—and then some of the lessons we've learned regarding implementing new initiatives. One of the concerns is that you understand that we are not politically naïve, nor are we unaware of some of the implications of what we're saying, but we still feel they need to be said.

The first place I want to start is training itself. One of the things that really ticks me off about this whole process is that we've talked a lot about structure and politics and all kinds of things, but there has not been a lot of discussion in this province in the last couple of years about training itself. There are nine areas, really, in the training area that need work. I'm going to cover only a couple.

There are emerging new technologies and skills that are going to be required by Canadian organizations to be successful. To date, very little research is being done on how you take those new technologies and transfer them into skills training programs. Our organization had to develop 22 programs for the business community because they didn't exist in private trainers, they didn't exist in community colleges, and we had to develop them. That's appalling. So there's an area in terms of training itself that is a real concern.

The second one is that we are using very outdated assessment tools in terms of introducing adult learners back into a learning situation, yet again very little money and effort is being spent in that particular area.

The third area is in terms of evaluation and follow-up to ensure that there's some kind of cost-effectiveness for the training that has been run, especially with public dollars. It is abysmal the way that is handled now. When we tried to go out and find them, we found the best resources were not available through the existing public sector; they were available through small individual organizations across the country that were offering us tremendous innovative ideas in terms of assessment.

What I'm trying to get at is that there are too many initiatives in small local grass-roots areas going on in the actual area of training itself that are not getting a hearing in the public sector now. My concern is, why on earth would we think that just by putting in a new structure, the attitude we have towards innovation and new research and development in the area of training will be listened to any more, whether this was a board of politically elected people, appointed people or people who were put through a process of representation?

What we're saying is that doing the research on the training areas and then teaching people how to implement is something that is not being looked at in this process. If we think that by simply having a new structure we're going to make a difference, I say no.

The second major area I wanted to point out was training and our connection we're making with the economy. Many assumptions have been made through this whole process of the role of training in the economic wellbeing of the province. Economic wellbeing, as you're well aware, is made up of many factors, and training is only one of them. Training in itself is not going to improve anything in terms of our economy. In fact, training for training's sake, which is going on over and over again in this province, can be a detriment.

Applicable training to the best practices of the best-known training design and delivery available in the world can make a difference. But one of the things we have to look at is that that kind of innovation starts with individuals who come up with an idea of a new and better way to do it, and these new initiatives are often found at the grass roots of organizations; they're not found within the public domain or within large structures, because those institutions in themselves are not geared to setting up entrepreneurship and intrapreneurship in terms of ideas. Large structures of education, hospitals and government are not conducive to that particular thing.

The other thing is that more and more contemporary leaders are finding out that working on community development hand in hand with training makes a huge difference. In fact, some of the existing ministries of the government today are looking at community development as one of the key ingredients of economic renewal.

If economic renewal depends on many factors which are highly interdependent and if local community development plays an active part in economic renewal, then where's the rationale to say that setting up a structure that separates training out from other issues and directs it from a provincial level is the best model we can possibly design? Or are we just not being innovative or creative enough to look at something that is better?

The third piece I want to mention is that even after 18 months there are many unresolved issues and concerns that are raised by many sectors and groups in our community. It concerns me that after all that time there aren't answers. There are just a couple I want to mention.

Back again to what everybody else has talked about: the makeup of the board excluding individuals or organizations that don't belong to unions, associations, special interest groups or other designated stakeholders. We still have not said who's going to speak for them.

Another one is that in our community of Hamilton-Wentworth we have established an amazing number of training partnerships and initiatives and have been acknowledged provincially, nationally and even internationally for the work we're doing. I don't understand the justification of the assumption that by putting in a new structure, that's going to make a difference and that's going to improve, when we can tell you right now what the barriers are and how you can help to keep us the leading-edge community we've become in training and development.

Another issue that has been brought forward many, many times is the fact that we have had no sense of a cost-benefit accountability from government. If you were in the private sector and you had to set up a business, a bank would never look at you unless you had done a total cost-benefit analysis and were accountable. You're dealing with public funds, which should make you even more accountable, and I still don't see anything that tells me what's going to happen with that.

The other thing is that there's an assumption being missed here: that the way we are presently structured in itself is not creating many of the problems we're dealing with in training in terms of the way the rules and regulations, the bureaucracy, have been set up. I have no ability at this present time to get past that in terms of trusting it is going to be any different this go-round.

One of the final things that concerns me very much is that in the past year, for instance, in our community we had over a thousand volunteers helping with the particular process of looking at some of our training needs in our community. I'm concerned that the whole question of natural, spontaneous and interested volunteerism is being threatened by an approach that starts to make it much more formal and much more bureaucratic.

Even if someone says it isn't, I can tell you right now that it's one of the concerns people are stating. I wouldn't

be mentioning it if people weren't saying it to me: "Linda, where's my role?" Our organization alone had over \$1 million worth of resources, in terms of equipment, man-hours etc, given to us by the people in the community.

The final piece I want to say, and then you can hit me, is the part that concerns me the most. We were given a large amount of money two years ago in our community to look into why Hamilton-Wentworth as a community has so many innovative initiatives and programs and has a history of that. Are there identifiable patterns in those initiations and those innovations, and could these patterns be articulated and transferred?

We did that project, and yes, there were patterns, and yes, we found out a lot of things. We have offered to discuss our findings in detail and to relate their applicability to the challenges we're facing provincially and even with OTAB, and we have never been taken up on this offer by anybody in the current government, and that concerns me. It concerns me because, if there's not a willingness to share existing new information, OTAB or no OTAB, why on earth would I ever believe, as an innovator, that there's going to be more attention paid once there's an OTAB structure?

Some of the patterns that emerged—and these are just a couple of them—was the fact that innovation started with individuals. It was an individual who came up with an idea for a new community agency or a new idea and through his or her visionary leadership gathered other people around. It didn't start in a committee room and it didn't start with a bunch of bureaucrats and it didn't start with a board.

Second, what made it successful was that most of the time they had to go around the existing status quo. It wasn't a matter of them having support for that; it was almost the opposite, that they found ways around the current system.

The other part of it, which was interesting, was the fact that there were definitely patterns of how you could initiate a project and see it successfully through. In reviewing the OTAB process to date, I'm not so sure we're following those best patterns, and this is my one chance to tell you about at least one of them.

In terms of new initiatives we saw that got started, there was particularly one part of the process that needs a little bit more explanation: All the successful initiatives talked about function before structure.

What I'm trying to say, as an example, is that if you are an architect and you are going to be building a home for a family, part and parcel of your job is to spend time with that family, find out what their issues are, what their concerns are and what's missing in the place where they exist now, until you understand the criteria of what they need to build their home, and then you would build it so that the structure would follow after you knew what would functionally make that family or that unit work.

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In order to choose the architect, you would look around for somebody who was reflecting your needs in terms of being able to design what you wanted designed. You wouldn't be looking for a tradesperson, a cabinetmaker or a bricklayer; you would be looking for the best architect.

What I want us to be thinking about are these questions: Did we sincerely talk to those contemporary architects of organizational structure who are doing the really leading-edge things, who have found better answers for organizational structure? Did we truly investigate other alternatives? Are we really convinced we understand what the existing barriers, concerns and issues are, and that having a board is the best solution to those issues and concerns over every other possible choice? Have we really investigated the functions that need a different kind of structure to support them, or are we working the other way around? Have we really resolved some of the functional issues we're facing before we're moving forward, and have we thought about different approaches by truly involving some of the labour market partners that have been working in these areas for a long time?

Finally, are we honouring the individuality of this province's communities and the contribution, as individual communities, that they're making to the wellbeing of Ontario, or did we hire tradespeople with limited vision to set in motion some kind of a structure that, when built, may not even address the most fundamental needs? Are we serving a political agenda in this process or the real needs of Ontario, and if so, why are we afraid to try out and step back and look at where we're going, with all of the comments and ideas that people have said?

We named this project *Voyageur* because we believe that Canadians, through time, especially as they pioneered in this country, didn't have road maps, didn't know where they were going, but risked trying going down certain rivers or trying going down certain tributaries, and we, as Canadians, on this issue of OTAB have got to look and see the need for new voyageurs. We must have the courage to review the landscape and listen to those who have the expertise of travelling those rivers. Our lives and those of the coming generations depend on it.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. Mr Wiseman and then Mr Sutherland.

Mr Wiseman: I'm going to hit you with a question right off the top.

I recognize this notion of innovation and skills. We've been deplorable at it for a long time, with government after government in our country succumbing to the voice of the minority. I look back to the 1950s when we were number one in computers, number one in metallurgy in terms of being able to fly higher and faster, number one in terms of developing the very first flying airplane that was for passenger service between New York and Toronto, all of them cancelled by governments.

The conundrum that is faced on a continuous basis, and we've heard it here in terms of accountability and spending of the money, is that the problem with the voyageurs is that when they dared to go down a stream that went nowhere and wasted time, effort and money, they weren't accountable to an opposition that screamed and yelled to make political points out of every single minute detail that perhaps went wrong. This is the conundrum that I think needs to be addressed.

Ms Moore: I understand.

Mr Wiseman: I taught scientific innovation when I was teaching history. You're right about who develops it, but what we've got now is the problem of governments being timid in the face of opposition, for political or for other reasons.

Ms Moore: I'm saying—and I'm being provocative here—that that's too bad. That's not a good enough reason, Jim, just because we have to deal with a political accountability. I'm saying that's our challenge. If we're going to be innovative, then it's our challenge to say: "Okay, this is an old, traditional approach to problems, so let's take up that challenge. We have to think of the political accountability. Now, how do we do it?" as opposed to saying: "Oh, well, this is a fairly traditional model. We sort of know how this one works, so let's go with that one." I don't believe for a second that we really looked.

Mr Wiseman: I'll just give you an example. I am currently involved with revisiting an issue that is long past being explored in other countries around the world, and that's the use of hydrogen in our economy. This was done way back in 1981 and I'm going back and relooking at it. It was cancelled. The rest of the world has passed us by in terms of using hydrogen as an alternative source of energy. It passed us by because of the timidity of governments to take the initiative and go forward with it. The reason for that is very simple: The voices of the people who were paying the bill didn't want to pay it. That's on the table. You're asking me to be real brave. I'm prepared to be, but when the billions of dollars may not pan out, there's a problem.

I'll turn it over to my colleague.

Mr Sutherland: I want to pick up a bit on your analogy about the architect for the home. The only problem in building this house is that you've got several families living in it, and it's hard to get those families to all agree on what the design should be. You've asked whether we've looked at the functions, and that analysis has gone on. I don't know if you read the original Premier's Council report on skills development.

Ms Moore: Yes, I have read everything.

Mr Sutherland: I think that does go and look first at some of the functions before the structure. They have gone and looked and seen what the successful countries have done. Germany was analysed, and I think Sweden, Japan and a couple of others. I think there has been quite a bit of that background stuff about looking at what the function should be and what the obstacles are. Not all those obstacles have been taken out of the way in the meantime, and unfortunately they won't be taken out in the short term, but I think over the long term, hopefully that is what's going to occur. So I do think some of the questions you raised have been dealt with in this process which started with the previous government and is being continued by this one.

You talked about not doing it in the traditional way. The OTAB model is not a traditional way, because it is a sense of shared responsibility between labour market partners. It is not specifically those who are delivering the programs solely setting the agenda, but it is the clients, more or less, the employees and the employers, who are really given the forefront in helping to set the agenda.

Ms Moore: Kimble, I think some of that's political rhetoric. I'm sorry.

Mr Sutherland: Okay, that's fine.

Ms Moore: I really believe that. I've seen almost every brief that has been produced before this particular group, and the majority of them are raising some of the same issues. The fact is that even if you have looked at Japan, Germany and whatever, I'm not talking about that; I'm talking about leading-edge change agents that are looking at totally different structures. I'm not saying, "Model after something else that exists." We have an opportunity in this country to do something that's very unique and that can work. I'm not disagreeing with the need for the change, and I'm not disagreeing that we have to look at things differently. I agree with that. I'm just saying that a lot of it is rhetoric in terms of what's going on right now.

There are still some serious problems between business and labour, and business has still got a lot of questions in terms of doing that. What I'm saying we learned from this process was that whenever an initiative moved ahead from the initial conditions, before they resolved those issues, they came up to bite them in the bum at the end. That's the part I'm concerned about, that from all the hundreds of people we talked to, we learned to never move ahead until all the families that want to build that house have come to some agreement on what it's going to look like. To pass the bill and then work them out later is a mistake, and it's too important.

Mr Sutherland: I would only suggest that you send a copy of your report to all the members here if you haven't. I would be interested in seeing it. The only other comment I have is that while I don't necessarily disagree with what you're saying, I'm just not sure how you grab a focus to do that at this stage when so much work has been done in a focused way on a successful model that has worked in other areas. I guess that's the dilemma.

1750

Ms Moore: That's also the challenge and it's also the opportunity.

The Chair: Mr Offer, please.

Mr Offer: It's with a certain caution that I'm going to be asking the questions. However, let me give it a crack.

On any reading of the bill, what one is left with, whatever his position is, is that it's a bill that has this thing called OTAB and it has these people representing certain interests and it says, "Go and do something." The objects and the purposes are so very broad that it could be argued there's no focus. I'm wondering what you would suggest to improve the bill, or are you really saying there is so much work yet to be done, let's do the work before we speak about a piece of legislation such as this?

Ms Moore: Yes. I said I'm not politically naïve at all, but what I am saying is, don't move ahead. I know this is ridiculous. They're in the majority; it'll pass. But I'll have said it and I'll continue to say it and I've been saying it for three years. We have a tremendous opportunity, if anybody in your party had the guts to table that legislation

and say: "Okay, who's our brain trust in Ontario in terms of training and development? Who's doing the leading-edge stuff?" Take that brain trust and start to work with that group to say: "All right. Here are some of the functional issues we're dealing with. How do we start to resolve those? Once we have that, then we will look at it."

Mr Offer: How do you respond when that point is brought forward and they say, "Well, this is a model that is a creature of consultation and a creature of investigation as to the experiences in Germany, Sweden and the like?" I say publicly that if this is it, my goodness gracious, I'd be very surprised. What do you do?

Mr Sutherland: It's not the end; it's the start of the process.

Mr Offer: How do you respond to that type of comment, that this is part of the process, when we respond by saying this is the legislation? I mean, this will be the end.

Mr Wiseman: Now you're being political.

Mr Offer: No, because it is, without question, that the groups will be formed underneath this legislation. They will take the direction from this legislation. The road will be paved and you'll be going down this road, and what I'm hearing you saying is: "This might not be the right road to go down. There might be a better, more progressive way to move, if only you have the courage to seek it out."

Ms Moore: Exactly. I do agree with that and I am saying hold off. I'm not saying do nothing; I'm saying hold off on the legislation and going forward with that, because everything they told us and every initiative was, you don't do that. You stop at initial conditions until you make sure you've got your groundwork well and then from that, far down the line, is the structure that supports that. That's only one of the principles we found out, by the way, in this process, but it's a very fundamental one.

I think the thing is that because we don't necessarily have the answers exactly how we do it, we do it a step at a time. To say you're going to put blanket legislation and then work your way through it, I have grave concerns about that, because it's bad enough if you put a game plan in place in anything, never mind that it's legislation, and partway down the road you find out it was totally the wrong way to go. We could be doing that.

The other part too is that we looked not necessarily at what's best in the world; we looked at those countries we assume are doing a better job than us and then said, "That's what we looked at in terms of structure." We didn't look at what's happening in some small, new, corporate kinds of companies and say, "How are they structuring to have their owner-operators and employees all work together?"

My answer to that is that I'm not suggesting that any government, right now, globally, has got necessarily the best one, but we want a Canadian one.

Mr Wiseman: What do you say to all the people who say: "Hurry up. Get going?"

Ms Moore: I say to them that every project we've ever undertaken has been successful. It takes three times as long to plan as it does to implement, and if you want to know examples, I'll give them to you. We do this all the time. With every initiative we have, we go through this process and it works.

Mr Sutherland: You say the report first started when, in 1989, the Premier's Council? It's 1993 now and it will be a little bit more before it's implemented, almost three times.

The Chair: What do you say to that, Ms Moore?

Ms Moore: I still don't believe your initial conditions are finished. If it takes longer, it takes longer.

Mr Sutherland: Fair enough.

Ms Moore: Okay? Have a delightful evening.

The Chair: Ms Moore, please let us tell you how grateful we are for your participation. You've been very effective at provoking some thought on the part of committee members.

Ms Moore: Is that an accomplishment?

The Chair: That is significant. I tell you the committee is grateful to you for participating in this process. We hope you will keep in touch. You've been asked by one of the committee members to please send on further information. If you wish, you can send a single copy to the clerk and the clerk's office will arrange for it to be distributed to committee members.

Ms Moore: By the way, Peter, we wrote it as a book at a grade 10 level; we did not write it as a government report.

The Chair: Wait a minute. Government reports, I suspect, may cater to a lower range. Grade 10? I think politicians might just be capable of reading it then. Thank you kindly.

I want to thank the staff people who assist us in making this committee work: Adrian James and Clayton Hatfield who work for the legislative broadcast service; Maureen Murphy from Hansard; Ann Anderson from the legislative research service; Tannis Manikel, clerk of this committee, who has throughout the course of these hearings and others that I've been associated with been very efficient, very effective and lent a great organizational leadership to it.

I would like to thank Mr Allen's staff, Mike Cohen, who's been here regularly and has been of great assistance in responding to questions raised by members of the committee, and Nick Roller and Peter Landry, from the ministry, who have similarly assisted. I would like to thank of course the ASL interpreters, Angi Tippet and Diane Huff, to whom we are grateful. My thanks to Mr Huget for assisting me in chairing and my thanks to the members of the committee for their cooperation.

We are adjourned until Monday, February 15, at some point during the day depending upon how many new delegations can be scheduled into the morning. Thank you, people.

The committee adjourned at 1757.

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Cunningham, Dianne (London North/-Nord PC) for Mr Turnbull
Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South/-Sud PC) for Mr Turnbull
Martin, Tony (Sault Ste Marie ND) for Mr Waters
Murdoch, Bill (Grey PC) for Mr Jordan
Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway
Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Dadamo
Wiseman, Jim (Durham West/-Ouest ND) for Mr Wood and Ms Murdock
Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Klopp

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Anderson, Anne, research officer, Legislative Research Service

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

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***Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

Conway, Sean G. (Renfrew North/-Nord L)

Dadamo, George (Windsor-Sandwich ND)

Jordan, Leo (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Klopp, Paul (Huron ND)

*McGuinty, Dalton (Ottawa South/-Sud L)

*Murdock, Sharon (Sudbury ND)

*Offer, Steven (Mississauga North/-Nord L)

Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

*Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)

*In attendance / présents

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Monday 15 February 1993

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Lundi 15 février 1993

Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and Adjustment
Board Act, 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre

Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Monday 15 February 1993

The committee met at 1005 in room 151.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993 LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

GOODWILL INDUSTRIES OF TORONTO

The Vice-Chair (Mr Bob Huget): Good morning. It's 10:05. We're discussing Bill 96, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board Act. Our first witnesses this morning are Goodwill Industries of Toronto. If you would identify yourselves for the purposes of Hansard, then proceed with your presentation. You're allocated one half-hour, and I'm sure the committee would appreciate some of that half-hour for questions and answers.

Ms Rae Thompson: Thank you. My name is Rae Thompson. I'm vice-president of community relations for Goodwill Industries.

Ms Sharon Myatt: Good morning. My name is Sharon Myatt and I'm the supervisor of the business training centre at Goodwill Industries of Toronto.

Ms Thompson: Mr Chairman and committee members, we are here today representing the 30-member volunteer board and the 450-member staff of Goodwill Industries of Toronto, the largest community-based vocational service agency in the greater Toronto area.

Today, we'll begin by offering you some brief background on Goodwill and what our stake is in the formation of the boards and agency that will govern OTAB. We will point out what we feel are the main strengths and weaknesses described in the bill. We'll offer some suggestions which we feel would greatly improve the OTAB agency's ability to service Ontarians well.

Sharon will bring forward from her rich experience as a trainer some concrete examples of how these improvements could affect hundreds of thousands of Ontarians. We will then offer you, briefly, four quotations from users of Goodwill programs and employers of Goodwill graduates.

Finally, we'd like to leave you with a list of questions we would ask you to ask yourselves as legislators before you recommend this bill for third reading before we open up for, we hope, about 15 minutes worth of questions.

We'll start with the background. Most people know Goodwill for its boxes and its stores. If you're like most people, that's been your experience with our agency. What most people do not know is that boxes and stores are only

the backdrop for the real story at Goodwill. The real story is work training for people who face chronic employment barriers.

While we're known for serving people with physical or psychiatric, developmental and emotional disabilities, it's a fact that anyone who has a serious problem getting and keeping a job is eligible to enter Goodwill's programs.

Goodwill's collection and retailing of donated goods is a multifaceted, real work training setting wherein all kinds of skills and work behaviours are offered and acquired. Years ago, in the 1930s, this setting was a sheltered workshop. However, while some Goodwills still provide much-needed and much-improved workshop settings, Toronto Goodwill has been out of the sheltered work business for over 20 years and into programs of community integration. Community integration is what the people we exist to serve have demanded of us, and we have responded to them with effective programs.

Because Goodwill's retail operation is a real enterprise, even though a non-profit one, it offers real work challenges. Our training programs take advantage of more than 30 very different work training settings based in our own operation. In addition to these, more than 70 employers in the greater Toronto area welcome us into their workplaces, providing consumers of our services with on-the-job work training settings of two to eight weeks' duration on the path to vocational self-reliance.

Goodwill's retail operation virtually funds its vocational rehab programs. The provincial Ministry of Community and Social Services has historically been asked to support only 20% of Goodwill's financial needs in operating the vocational programs that we offer for Ontarians.

In order to offer programs that are relevant to individuals seeking employment, we must be and are in constant touch with employers in all sectors. Goodwill's understanding of the needs of employers guide our program development so that consumers of our services can aim at realistic, satisfying employment upon program completion. Our placement and retention track records prove this approach is a successful one.

As you can appreciate, Goodwill is unique. Goodwill is unique because of the fact that each person's program is individually planned to meet his or her needs for the greatest possible attainable level of vocational self-reliance. Each consumer is the decision-maker for his or her own vocational path. Each consumer has the resource of a team of advisers including, at different times, a vocational counsellor, trainer, job placement specialist and a job coach. Each consumer is in constant touch with real employers and real work situations throughout his or her program, a strength which is unparalleled in most training settings.

This high level of service sounds resource-intensive and it is, but it needs to be. Chronic unemployment is no

small problem or easy issue to resolve. If it were, it would be fixed. Band-Aids and quick fixes and programs that try to fit square pegs into round holes are proven unsuccessful. Goodwill's tailored, multidisciplinary approach is proven successful.

Spending precious resources once to fix a job is more economical than underspending five or six times trying to get it right. When you have fund-raising programs that benefit people, such as Goodwill's donated goods retail operation, the community doesn't mind pitching in resources to help us get the job done. Perhaps Goodwill's role as a vocational service provider is a surprise to a lot of you. We don't spend a lot of money promoting our services, but we do hope to become better known for what we do in the coming few years.

Finally, as background, I'd like to offer a few statistics. Goodwill Toronto served 755 people last year. All of those people came to Goodwill receiving benefits from one of the following agencies: vocational rehabilitation services of the province, Metro social services, Canadian employment and immigration centres, Workers' Compensation Board or private insurers.

Since 1935, 20,000 Ontarians have become competitively employed using Goodwill services as their starting tool. Every tax dollar spent training at Goodwill is repaid five times over within 18 months of competitive employment through income tax and sales tax contributions, not to mention productivity. Of trainees who complete their programs, 98% get jobs in the community. These same people model success for their immediate community and begin to break the cycle of disadvantage.

Employers report higher retention rates with Goodwill alumni than with other employees, which is an interesting fact. Goodwill has three affiliations with local boards of education, one accreditation with George Brown College and over 70 training host employers throughout the greater Toronto area. Provincially, there are five Goodwill agencies in Ontario, and worldwide, Goodwill Industries is the single largest employer and trainer of people who face employment barriers. There were 179 Goodwill agencies, serving 120,000 individuals, in North America last year.

That is the end of our background section. If it's not directly clear from the background, I'd like to now describe for you what Goodwill's stake is in OTAB. Goodwill, being a proven, successful, community-based vocational service agency, is involved in the task of OTAB, which is to provide work training that meets the needs of Ontarians. Goodwill is a model of partnership-oriented training programs that meet the diverse needs of individuals, of labour, of business and of government.

Goodwill exists in many ways because business, labour, government and education have failed historically to meet the work training and work adjustment needs of a huge proportion of people, most of whom are now on welfare or receiving family benefits. Goodwill has responded to the needs of many such individuals and offered them a viable choice to make real change, supported with services, in their lives.

In 1993, we applaud OTAB's efforts to bring together business, labour, government, educators and some particu-

lar minorities to plan and carry out a training strategy that works for Ontarians. This is why we are so astounded that community-based agencies, which are proven successful deliverers of vocational services, are conspicuously absent from the OTAB board structure and the agency functioning as proposed in Bill 96.

Goodwill and other community based agencies have been doing what OTAB wants to do, and doing it successfully, for years. Our stake in the creation of the OTAB boards and agencies has two main prongs:

(1) We do not wish to see years of building, research, resources, progress and success ignored or lost because an ineffective agency structure does not acknowledge community agencies; and (2) we especially do not want to see the people we exist to serve have their choices for service, and thus their chances for vocational success, limited by an OTAB board or agency structure that ignores community-based agencies. To sum up, our stake is one of ensuring effectiveness and vocational training choices for Ontarians, and we feel that the OTAB board and agency structures can be improved to achieve this.

We believe OTAB's greatest strength is in involving the many stakeholder groups of the training issue at the board level. However, a double-edged sword, this could be a weakness too, as divided interests may have trouble focusing on the goals of OTAB.

A serious weakness, as we see it and as I mentioned, is the omission of community-based training agencies as designated members on the provincial board and on local OTAB boards. As we have outlined, these agencies offer services that no business, labour, public education or post-secondary education institutions or fee-based training services offer.

They're unique in the mix, uniquely in touch with the employment market, as well as the barriers that so many people face. Hundreds of thousands of Ontarians could be ill served or underserved and have to continue their dependence on social assistance. We would therefore strongly encourage a revision of board composition to include community-based agency representation.

We appreciate that every special interest group in the province has sought board representation, but every special interest group does not present a track record of proven success, using exactly the same model you hope to institute, and placing consumer choice, service and cost-effectiveness above all else.

Secondly, we feel that while OTAB's intention to ensure representation of women and people with disabilities, racial minorities and francophones is a good intention, its expression in the bill, we feel, is poor. Being female or belonging to a racial minority or having a disability or speaking French are all attributes of people. Being involved in business or labour or education is something a person does. To designate seats on the training boards to people whose only reason for being there is an attribute, such as being female, having a disability, is to focus again on the very features which have brought about discrimination against those people.

To include people because of their attributes alone, we feel, is just as counterproductive as excluding people because

of their attributes alone. We would therefore recommend that OTAB's good intentions to reflect Ontario's diversity be re-expressed in the board composition section of Bill 96. We would suggest the restatement of board positions in terms of what people do and the addition of a statement of the expectation that all board positions are positions for which women, people with disabilities, members of racial minorities and francophones are expected to be included.

I'd like to introduce you now to my colleague Sharon Myatt.

Ms Myatt: I've had extensive experience training in both the private, public and community-based sectors. I'd like to address the panel from a more compassionate, experiential level. Many ask: "Why community-based training? Why can't the public, separate or private institutions serve all needs of all consumers?" The answer is indisputable. Our phone lines are perpetually ringing. Our waiting lists are full. Referral agencies are full. Boards of education, community colleges, private training institutions all have consumers who fall through the cracks.

The consumers we train have the same characteristics, the same competencies and abilities as those attending these institutions. They just have different circumstances which hinder the learning process and prevent them from entering the "normal path." When a sole-support mother living in a one-bedroom, drug-infested Metro housing complex tries to attend classes, she needs special supports, supports like housing advocacy, parenting, one-on-one instant counselling and group life skills counselling. Or take the scenario further, adding an abusive partner who steals the monthly welfare cheque. Arranging for legal counsel, emergency shelter referral or taking someone to a food bank—we provide these.

Now imagine sending the same woman out to the corporate environment. What about clothing, shoes, things we might take for granted? She is unable to purchase these in order to fit in. What about the highly educated man with a physical or speech disability or the eighth-grade dropout with an inherent fear of the traditional classroom? How do you adjust curriculum and approach to learning to fit all needs? We do this by providing a warm, comfortable, non-threatening environment with group instruction or individual instruction.

Whatever we needed we can adjust, because we're not mandated by standardized course outlines which can't be altered and modified, highly weighted tests, standard textbooks and resource material. We offer a hybrid solution to consumers, a structured environment for those who want it and a non-structured environment for those who prefer or need small-group, one-on-one learning environments; multiple tests with lowered weighting, enabling the consumer with an inherent fear of tests to feel more comfortable; and various methodologies, textbooks and resource materials to suit all learning curves.

1020

I should not underestimate the importance, however, of the college accreditation to many of our consumers. Our partnerships with the community colleges, with school boards through their OBS and upgrading programs, with

programs such as Futures and various bridging programs in our community, all of these are an integral part of training and a part of Goodwill's success.

My experience has been that all consumers can rise to the same heights; it's just the alternative pathways that we provide them to get to this summit. We provide these alternative pathways at Goodwill and at many other community-based programs throughout the province.

Ms Thompson: Our strong recommendation on the OTAB agency is that a clause on local boards be built in to specify basic criteria for training agencies to be recognized by OTAB. Without such a clause, qualified agencies such as Goodwill could be excluded from participation by a local board for an arbitrary reason. We therefore urge you to state in the bill itself that if a quality standard is met and all practices are legal and ethical, no agency will be excluded from providing services.

We'd like to share some testimonials with you today. The people who said the things we're about to quote could not be here today because they're working, which we've noted is perhaps a greater testimonial than anything we might have to say.

We'll offer you statements from two service consumers and from two employers. First, Yvonne. Yvonne came to Goodwill about two years ago. Fifteen years as a health care aide had resulted in a damaged back for her. Unable to work for almost a year, she was referred to Goodwill for vocational assessment. A black, 39-year-old woman, Yvonne put how she felt this way: "It was very frightening. I thought about my age, I thought about my skills. I thought, 'What's out there? I can't do anything.'"

Through Goodwill's rehabilitation services, Yvonne learned typing and other business skills. Today you can see her at work if you go to the National Bank of Canada's corporate office here in Toronto. In fact, she'll probably greet you. She's a clerk-receptionist and has been for over a year now.

About her Goodwill training, Yvonne says: "It gave me the support and confidence I needed. I don't know what I would be doing now otherwise."

Thirty-five-year-old Hector came to Canada as a refugee from El Salvador. Here's how he describes what he faced when he first arrived: "It's a circle. You can't get a job here without Canadian experience and you can't get experience without a job."

An experienced teacher, Hector spent a year and a half searching for a job before he enrolled in a customer service program that Goodwill runs in cooperation with Metro's social services and the city of York board of education's adult day school. As he completed the 20-week program, Goodwill helped Hector find his current position at the Lakeshore toy library, working with members of the Spanish-speaking community. Hector has broken out of that circle now and says, "I can help other refugees and also use my skills with the children."

Now, on the employer side, Steven Shinoff is president of A-1 Rent-a-Tool here in Toronto. Approached years ago by a Goodwill job placement counsellor, he agreed to permit trainees in Goodwill's 39-week marine and small engine

repair program to test their new skills and behaviours in his shop for a limited period of time.

Several years later, here's how Steven characterizes his relationship with Goodwill: "I've hired three Goodwill graduates and now I still have trainees coming in sometimes. I am impressed with the speed and quality of work the Goodwill people have. It is good that the people succeed, whether because of our business or Goodwill's or something innate in them; we have had good success with the program."

Our final testimonial is from Joanne Burtnik, a supervisor of the law firm of Fraser and Beatty, also in Toronto. Fraser and Beatty has, with the full support of the firm's partners, hosted people in training and hired one to date. Says Joanne: "We really believe Goodwill's program is excellent. I'd like to see other law firms doing this."

Finally today, as we said when we began, we'd like to leave you with a list of questions. We hope our deputation will be helpful to you as you review Bill 96 and we hope you can answer these questions for yourselves before you recommend the bill for passage.

Ms Myatt: The six questions we want you to ask yourselves as legislators before you recommend this bill:

(1) Does this board composition and agency structure limit or expand choices for the Ontario consumer?

Ms Thompson: (2) Does this board composition and agency structure capitalize on existing, proven, successful community resources?

Ms Myatt: (3) Does this board composition and agency structure seek to minimize costs and bring cost-effective returns to Ontario taxpayers, business, labour unions and all individuals?

Ms Thompson: (4) Does this bill ensure a development pace and an ongoing structure that allows for a well-considered and effective implementation? We've noted that we would not like to see a repeat of the recent Jobs Ontario scramble, which has alienated a lot of stakeholders because of lack of clarity.

Ms Myatt: (5) Are community-based agencies going to be heard and understood under the structures offered in Bill 96?

Ms Thompson: Finally, will the hundreds of thousands of Ontarians now waiting for services continue to slip through the cracks? We hope not. Please answer these questions for yourselves as you present your recommendations.

That completes the formal part of our presentation. We'd like to entertain any questions members might have.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. Mr Offer, three minutes.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): Thank you for your presentation. I certainly enjoyed your presentation because it came in three parts: firstly, the background of Goodwill, and I don't think there are many people who are not aware of the many years of success and the track record that Goodwill has and the tremendous service it's given to the greater community; secondly, I enjoyed the middle portion because it really spoke to the legislation itself; and thirdly, in summation, some of the success that Goodwill

has had, and I think we all want to work to enhance the type of success that Goodwill has had in the past for the future.

My question deals with the board itself. I think I heard you say that you would want a position on the board. As you will know, under the legislation there is the agency, and you can see where the seats have been allocated, but there is also this thing called a local board, the particulars of which we do not know because it's not in the legislation. Are you looking for a, for want of a better word, guaranteed position on a local board or on the agency overseeing the boards themselves?

Ms Thompson: I think we'd like to see a community-based agency representative on the provincial board, and our hope would be that community-based agencies would be represented at the local board level, although we recognize that it has to be established locally.

Mr Offer: I thank you for the answer, but I hear from the presentation that you believe it is absolutely essential that this legislation contain within it the establishment of local boards. It cannot be left up to any discretion, as it now is, in the legislation. I just wonder if that's a clear statement of your position.

Ms Myatt: Absolutely, and I would like it to go on record that I would like to sit on the local board at the local board level, and I think it should be built into the legislation.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): I just have a quick question. Near the end of your presentation you had made a comment about Jobs Ontario and the difficulty you were having. Could you expand on that? I kind of missed what you said.

Ms Thompson: Our experience has been one of dealing with a situation that has been rushed, that has not been clearly expressed from the point of view of the province. We've had a difficult time understanding what our role could be under Jobs Ontario, and among service providers there's been a great deal of confusion. As a result, I know that a lot of the service providers that we have alliances with, particularly at the community college level, have completely separated themselves from the process. Our feeling is that this is a tremendous waste of time, energy and resources, and we'd really rather see something that's better considered and better paced in its execution.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Thank you very much for your presentation. I was kind of amused when you got to the part about the experience of the immigrant who didn't have any Canadian experience. I experienced that myself when I came to Canada. I was told, "Oh, you can't get a job in that business; you have to have Canadian experience." I remember leaving the employment office sort of dragging my heels along. You do an excellent job of helping people to fit in.

I think the key concern that you've raised is the question of the composition of the board. We've heard a lot of presentations along those lines. It has been suggested by some people who have come to make presentations that perhaps the board should be expanded to 30 seats and have a different division. I notice by your facial expressions that

you don't agree. I don't like the idea of a 30-seat board; I think it becomes very unwieldy.

Ms Thompson: It's unwieldy, exactly.

1030

Mr Turnbull: Could you just talk about what in your estimation the ideal composition of that board would be?

Ms Thompson: I know when we reviewed and discussed it our feeling was that some of the positions on the current board have been specifically targeted, and we mentioned this in the presentation, to be a female or a member of a racial minority or a person with a disability. While we think this is a good intention, let it be a stakeholder with a disability or let it be a female who's out of work. Our prime concern is that stakeholders, like service providers, are underrepresented on the board. Educators and trainers have only a small place in that. Also, stakeholders who are unemployed and who are looking for service are not all that well represented either.

My recommendation, and I think our agency recommendation, would be to list the specific stake that the board member has in the agency, increase the training positions by about two positions and increase the unemployed and receiving services stakeholder representation. Maybe you can do that through research, I don't know, but in terms of a board structure it would be ideal to have a consumer/stakeholder represented on the board that isn't business or government or labour or trainer.

Mr Turnbull: Another point you make in your questions that we should ask ourselves is the question of cost-effective returns to Ontario taxpayers, business, labour unions and all individuals. Could you expand on that a little bit?

Ms Thompson: Sure. The community-based agency that depends on donated resources, to some extent, from the rest of the community is involving people on a voluntary basis in accomplishing this job and depends on fewer tax dollars than many other education-based or training-based organizations. This kind of cost-effectiveness is a way of involving the community without doing it through taxing members of the community and we feel is a very viable alternative to a tax-based or fee-based training system. So our feeling is that by cost-effective returns to people, tax dollars will be spent in a way that generates the most for the money, and the rest of the community will get involved in funding in whatever way it can so that the burden is not only on government or business or trainers.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Thank you very much for your presentation. I regret we don't have more time to discuss it. There are so many points you've raised that I think we could gain a lot from discussing.

I did want to ask you about the attributes that you raised, because the way we see it is that people aren't going to be there simply because of the attributes. I think the idea is that because of attributes, people end up in certain positions, and that's the kind of experience we want to draw on. That's why racial minorities, women and francophones have representation, to take advantage of the kinds of positions they end up in. But the overall idea is

that they will be deliberating on training issues with the community interest in mind and from the perspective of the groups they represent. I'd just like, then, to go back to that. Since your experience seems so deep and wide, how do you think the reference group will work in your case, that you'll have access to the governing board in that way and to the community group as well?

Ms Thompson: I'm not sure I understand.

Mr Gary Wilson: Just the idea of reference groups that would allow for the broader representation. We've already agreed that 22 sounds like an optimum number of board members, so what we're trying to do is include as much experience as we can, given that everyone has attributes, but we have to narrow it somehow. So again, using the public interest guide, people are there not only representing themselves certainly or even their groups narrowly but the broader public interest as well. I'm just asking you how you think that will work with the reference group model.

Ms Thompson: I think you'll still end up with women on the board and members of racial minorities and people with disabilities and francophones. That would be my greatest hope. I think that the experience those people will be bringing to the board is not only based on the fact that they're female or not only based on the fact that they represent a racial minority.

The reason we bring it up as an issue is mostly because it hits a hot button with us as an agency. We often get requests from employers who are starting off on the path to enlighten themselves, to offer employment in a more equitable way, who will come to us and say, "Okay, I'm ready to hire somebody with a disability." They are looking for somebody to hire based on that attribute rather than based on a selection of qualifications. It's our experience that it's a disservice to both the employer and the person with a disability if you don't focus on what that person can bring to the workplace. The fact that the person has a disability is an attribute that is not related to the job performance.

It hits a hot button with us because so many times we've heard people say, "Oh, that person can't do the job because she's disabled," or "That person can do the job because she's disabled," and we feel that it's a characterization that is incidental to the mainstream activity that a person is involved in.

It's perhaps sensitivity that, because we experience it with trainees and employers, we point it up that way. But I think a board, a local or a provincial board, needs to have representatives from each of those groups and needs to have representatives who can say something material about training and education in those groups. If you're looking for someone who's looking for work and you're able to invite a member who is female or who has a disability or who is a francophone, then you've got a real double relevance in your perspective.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. I'd like to thank Goodwill Industries of Toronto for making their presentation this morning, and each of you for making it on their behalf. I think the committee will agree that you've

raised some very important perspectives and I trust that, indeed, the committee members will ask themselves those six questions on your behalf and on behalf of people who will be using the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. Thank you very much for being here this morning.

Ms Thompson: Thank you for the opportunity.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR

The Vice-Chair: The next scheduled witness is the Ontario Federation of Labour, if they could come forward, please. Welcome back, gentlemen. If you could identify yourselves once again for the purposes of Hansard, we'll proceed. I'm not sure if you have any kind of a presentation to make other than I know you were requested to come back to answer further questions. So if you would, after identifying yourselves, let me know if you've got a presentation to make or you want to go straight into questions.

Mr Ken Signoretti: My name is Ken Signoretti, I'm the executive vice-president, and with me is Jim Turk, who is the education director from the Ontario Federation of Labour. No, Mr Chairman, we don't have a presentation. We were asked back and we're amenable to any questions you might have. We're not really sure why we're here in the first place.

The Vice-Chair: Okay, thank you very much then. I'll go to the Progressive Conservative Party and Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Since I'm not sure either and I wasn't part of the subcommittee, I'd like to wait if you don't mind. Let someone else have the first go at it, whoever requested it, because my colleague and I weren't aware of this.

The Vice-Chair: What we're going to do, I think in fairness, is divide the time up 10 minutes per caucus.

Mrs Cunningham: That's fine.

The Vice-Chair: If you want to stand your 10 minutes down, we'll proceed to the government party.

Mrs Cunningham: I would like to do that, Mr Chairman.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): They were the ones who asked for it.

The Vice-Chair: The Liberal Party will also stand down their questions and, might I add, if you stand them down, we've got a serious problem.

Mr Signoretti: It might be a good idea because I'm on a parking meter.

Mr Ramsay: Actually, after my 10 minutes you can go and put some money into your parking meter. It would be no problem.

I want to thank you very much for coming back because I and my colleague Steve Offer felt that you made a very positive presentation when you were here. I felt badly that we couldn't have engaged in some more discussion back and forth because I find a lot of times we get a lot that's most valuable from our discussions. I want this OTAB to work.

I think you agree, and you've been a proponent of this sort of thing, that training and adjustment are crucial for the redevelopment of the economy in Ontario and we've got to get something that works, so the structure of it is very important. I know people don't necessarily like to talk about process, but you from your point of view understand that it's important.

I also know that, if OTAB is to be credible, it has to be trusted, it has to be respected as the institution. That's what we're creating here, I think, a new institution like school boards have been creating for the elementary and secondary levels of education. We're creating an institution, so I take this very seriously. I've got a series of, not necessarily new, but questions I'd like to just again talk about.

1040

I'm concerned about representation. I say to you I accept that, I believe that representatives from organized labour can represent all workers when it comes to general labour issues. I don't dispute that and I don't have any problem with that, and some might. But again I'm concerned that because of the sectors of the economy that find themselves unorganized, I just worry about those sectors that won't have a voice at the table, especially when it comes to the local organizations. I have great concern there. As you know, Ontario is such a diverse area. Oshawa and Hamilton are very different than rural southwestern Ontario or a mining town of northern Ontario.

I just want to ask you why you think it's important that seven of the eight worker reps need to come from OFL-affiliated unions and the other one would be from the construction trades.

Mr Signoretti: Thank you, Mr Ramsay. You know, it's something that we in the Ontario Federation of Labour have wrestled with for a long time in terms of representation. I guess the issue comes down to one of accountability. There are many issues, but this is one of them, I guess. It's not a guess: I know. When you're dealing with the Ontario Federation of Labour or the chamber of commerce or the Canadian Manufacturers' Association or whatever you have, these people here go down to represent those organizations and then there's an accountability process.

The problem we have is with unorganized workers, and we say very sincerely that we try to represent everybody with our convention and everything. But the fact of the matter comes down to, who are they accountable to? Who do they become accountable to? If you had an unorganized worker sitting on a board, or even a local board, when he goes back, who does he talk to and who does he say to, "These are the things that have to be done"?

It may be very valid but where does he express this and what organization does he work through to try to achieve those goals? That's a real problem. Is it just self-interest on the individual's part? It's a real problem and we honestly feel and we honestly believe that we are in the best position because we have the expertise to represent working people.

Mr Ramsay: So your argument is that, because the person comes from an organization, he is bound to speak

for that organization and therefore accountable to all those members.

Mr Signoretti: Well, that's one of them. The accountability process is one, but there are many others. Jim might want to add to it.

Mr Jim Turk: When you were talking about local boards it's certainly our intention that the representatives of labour from local boards will be from the communities represented by that board. What the Ontario Federation of Labour can do, working with our affiliates in the labour councils, is to say, "What are the major economic sectors in that region and how can we have labour representatives who reflect the diversity of that region on that board?"

Ken's point, which is quite important, is the issue of accountability. Not so much speaking for the organization, but rather, when that person is at the table he or she is not there as an individual, he or she is there voicing the concerns of workers in that industry or workers generally in that region. What coming from organized labour allows them to do is to go back to a broader group of workers and be able to bring forward views that come from that breadth.

Individuals who are there not representing anybody really have nobody to go back to. They may be able to speak for their own life experience or they may be able to speak from the point of view of the firm they work for, but they really don't have a mechanism to talk with other workers to bring the views of the collectivity, which is what we want at that table.

Mr Ramsay: Let's accept for a minute then, as OTAB is being brought forward at the Ontario level, that we accept that mix for now. What I'm concerned about at the local level is that we don't impose the structure, the rigours, that we have on the Ontario board, on the local people; that there may be a natural affinity of people there to each other that may be different from the structure we have established for the OTAB and that we're going to sort of put this Queen's Park stamp—say we accept works for the overall Ontario board—impose that on the local communities.

Let's say for a second that maybe it's right for OTAB to be structured so. But maybe it isn't and doesn't work locally, and we're not going to be encouraging a community of interests to develop. I think it would be very effective at the local level, but we're going to put our stamp from Queen's Park on the local people to say, "This is how it's got to be."

I'm very much a fan in this act of the local boards, and I'm kind of upset that there's not much mention of them. In fact, I think maybe that's where we should be starting. But I'm very concerned that they are effective and they have this community of interest developed and that we don't impose this solution from Queen's Park.

Mr Turk: The plan for local boards is a very important aspect of OTAB, and I think we all share the desires you articulated in terms of effective local boards that can speak for their communities and are sensitive to the diversity of their communities. If the question you were raising, though, when you talked about the stamp of Queen's Park,

if you were talking about that the representation should be as on OTAB, with 22—eight labour, eight business etc—I would argue that it's important that we set those guidelines now.

Let me give you an example. In Durham region there was a desire to get going on the local boards some time ago, so somebody called a bunch of people together from a number of different sectors. They sat around, and this group of people came up with an idea of what their local board should look like: It should have 24 or 25 people, there would only be four from labour, there would be a farmer. I mean, they had some makeup.

Now the question is, if you just say it's up to the community to decide, well, what community? Who gets to call the initial meeting? Who gets to decide who's invited to the initial meeting? Around whose table is that initial meeting held? How you answer each of those questions will shape what kind of board comes out, and I think if you leave it loose like that, what you're going to find is a very long period of discontent at the local level, because whoever's not invited will say, "Why wasn't I invited?" or "How come she got to call the meeting?" or whatever.

I just think it's like the issue of boundaries. I mean, we can tie this whole process up for ever in procedural wranglings. There is a case made that 22 is too big for a local community board; there's a case I've heard that it's too small. I know when we've talked to labour councils in various areas, when they start looking at the diversity of economic sectors, the diversity of geographical communities within a local board, they are saying, "How can we do that with just 22?"

On the other hand, if you start getting bigger than that, it starts to be ineffective as a board. I think sorting out that you want a priority of business and labour and who else you want represented would make sense so the body can get on with choosing its representatives and get to the real reason we're setting them up, and that's to deal with training. We've been dealing with all of these representation and structural issues for so long that it may be my children's grandchildren's day before we get on with the training.

Mrs Cunningham: So you're saying that in the regulations or perhaps in the act itself there should be some broad direction on the makeup of the local board? Would that be what you're saying?

Mr Turk: Yes. The Ontario Federation of Labour's position has been that the Legislature should decide what the framework for the structure of local boards should be. We would prefer—

Mrs Cunningham: Right in the act.

Mr Turk: Or in regulation.

Mrs Cunningham: Okay. I just wondered if you preferred one or the other.

Mr Turk: We lean towards its being in the act, but act or regulation, it should be laid out so that people can get on with choosing their representatives and get people together and start hashing out the real issues of substance here, which are training issues.

Mrs Cunningham: Okay. So when you use the word "framework" here, you might even be getting into specific numbers, you think.

Mr Turk: Oh, yes. We'd prefer a specific number.

Mrs Cunningham: Have you put that in writing? Have you put the numbers in writing?

Mr Turk: We think the model that was used both for the federal board and for OTAB is probably fine for local boards: eight, eight, four and two.

Mrs Cunningham: All right. On that one, you mentioned that there would be, you know, a lot of discontent if it wasn't defined. I can tell you there's lots of discontent right now on the makeup of the OTAB board itself, and there are probably going to be a couple of strong amendments that the committee's going to have to look at, either put forward by the government or perhaps they'll be put forward jointly, and that is with regard to the education community.

As you know, in most jurisdictions the education community is a very important participant in locating training positions and in making certain that both young people and people who are being retrained find the appropriate spot after they've been defined by business and labour. I'm wondering, given the influx of presentations, how you feel about that. Do you think we should be looking at more of a tripartite board now, given what we've heard? Just give me your opinions.

Mr Turk: No, we do not feel you should be looking at more of a tripartite board. As you can appreciate, you're setting up a board that's going to have enormous control over training in this province and presumably enormous control over how dollars get allocated, both at the local level and at the provincial level. It's not surprising that everyone who doesn't have a lot of representation would like more and everyone who has no representation would like to have some. Whatever choice you make as to the issue of representation, people are going to want change.

1050

All I'm saying is that the Legislature should, either through legislation or through regulations, work that out so we can get on with dealing with the issues. No matter how you choose there are going to be some people who are going to be unhappy. We think the model with significant business-labour representation but also important representation from the equity groups and a decision-making model that gives voice to the equity groups and education trainers is an appropriate one. We're happy with the model the Tories federally and the NDP provincially have put together.

Mrs Cunningham: Actually, the makeup of the OTAB board and the makeup of the local boards with regard to the federal government—there's no direction to us on that.

Mr Turk: No. What I was making reference to is, the federal board makeup was eight, eight, four and two. That's the proposed makeup for the provincial board and we think that would be a suitable model for local boards as well.

Mrs Cunningham: But you know also that it's an advisory committee federally, and this one does have a lot of power. I just want you to think about one thing and you might want to get back to me later.

In having the opportunity to look a little bit further on what's going on in Europe, where they've had some success in the last five or six years—more years in the UK—but where they have restructured. The reason they've got the education community with such a high profile is basically that they're, for want of a better word, the gofers, the ones who find the training spots after business and labour have decided where they ought to be, and after they've both agreed that this is where the emphasis ought to be. They're the ones who actually work with the people being retrained, if they're re-entering the workforce or at another stage, and they're also the ones who work with the young people, apprentices. That's why they've got more, I would say, influence on how it can happen and that's why they're there.

I just wondered if you would give it some thought, given those models, especially since you're representing the education component of labour.

Mr Turk: Actually, we've given an enormous amount of thought to that; we've reviewed European models, thought about the question you're raising. I would make two points in response to your comments.

The first is that the simple distinction between the labour market partners who are purchasers of training and the educators who are the deliverers of training is not a useful distinction. As I've been involved in the OTAB process, it becomes very clear that everyone around that table is a deliverer of training. A very significant number of employers—far fewer than we would like, but none the less a significant number of employers—deliver training to their own workers. Labour delivers a lot of training. Most of the people representing the equity groups who've been involved in this process are community-based trainers who deliver training. In fact, around these tables are an enormous number of educators. That's the first point.

Secondly, what's being proposed—

Mrs Cunningham: The educators would argue that of course. That's why they're coming before the committee.

Mr Turk: Some of the educators. Remember, the group you're calling educators is made up of five distinct and often irreconcilable sets of interests. You have the school boards, the colleges, the universities, private trainers and community-based trainers.

The other point I think is important to remember in these discussions is that the European models are very different than what's being proposed here, not just in terms of structure but in terms of responsibility.

Mr Turnbull: Can I ask you, along those lines: Do you feel, then, that we should change our apprenticeship programs here?

Mr Turk: In what regard?

Mr Turnbull: Well, I'm asking you. You're saying European models are very different. Do you feel we should be changing our apprenticeship programs here?

Mr Turk: We've proposed a number of ways in which they can be improved, sure, but the basic apprenticeship model we think is a sound one. There are issues of equity and access that have to be much more successfully addressed than they have been in the past, but the OTAB model being proposed and the creation of an apprenticeship council will provide an opportunity for those who are most knowledgeable about apprenticeship to be involved.

Mr Turnbull: When we look at, say, the German model of apprenticeships, we know there's a partnership between business, labour and government. In fact it's administered by the local chambers of commerce. What do you feel about that concept?

Mr Turk: There are a lot of problems when one looks at models in other countries about importing them. There are quite a number of cultural differences, so it's hard to give you a quick or flip answer to that question. The German model as such would not be easy or in fact feasible to graft on to a Canadian situation.

Mrs Cunningham: Why? What part of the German model wouldn't be?

Mr Turk: First of all, there are parts of it we may not want grafted on.

Mrs Cunningham: What part for instance?

Mr Turk: An enormous number of people go through apprenticeship programs. Critics in Canada often point to the German model and say, "Look, they produce such a high percentage of apprentices," but you also have to look at where those apprentices work. Are there a lot of people who are trained as metalworking apprentices who work as bakers? So, yes, they have their apprenticeship.

Second, it introduces a model where kids are streamed at a very early age and all sorts of opportunities are denied the young people, which is somewhat contrary to the direction we want to go in.

Third, there's a much more significant role for labour in the German model than there is here.

Mr Turnbull: But once you've got them into an industry, isn't it appropriate that they be well trained?

Mr Turk: There's no question that they'd be well trained, but apprenticeship is a model for training people how to perform highly skilled trades. It's not a particularly appropriate model for semi-skilled or less-skilled work.

Mr Turnbull: Okay, let's just look at the more highly skilled matters. One of the aspects of the German training system—I know you have been pushing towards some sort of training tax—is that they understand everybody is going to be bear some of the cost. Typically, in Germany, it costs employers \$8,400 a year. That's the average cost of training.

However, there is a quid pro quo in the sense that people who are taking apprenticeship programs in Germany get relatively low wages during those years, so in some way they're also offsetting that. The average apprenticeship earnings in Germany are between \$575 and \$675. I wonder if you can comment on that.

Mr Turk: In a sense, we have the worst of both worlds here, that is, apprentices in Canada also work for relatively low wages for the most part.

Mr Turnbull: Not for that amount of money.

Mr Turk: In most apprenticeship fields, the apprentice is paid 40% of the journeyman's rate. The highest was 50%. In fact, the apprenticeship branch has recently removed that, which leaves all those apprentices in unorganized workplaces—

Mr Turnbull: How much does that equate to in dollars?

Mr Turk: It depends on the journeyman's rate.

Mr Turnbull: Give me an average then.

Mr Turk: It would vary by the apprenticeship field. In other words, in the highest-paid metalworking trades, it would be a lot higher than for bakers.

Mr Turnbull: Okay, how much would that be per month?

Mr Turk: It could vary between \$7 an hour and \$13 an hour or \$12 an hour. The interesting thing in your observation is that apprentices earn half of the going rate here, whereas employers do not consistently pay as they do in Germany. So we have the lower wages for the participants but we don't have the commitment from business to provide the training.

There are a number of school boards in the province currently—

Mr Turnbull: But you don't have the German level of—

The Vice-Chair: Mr Turnbull, your time has expired. Could you allow Mr Turk to conclude his response.

Mr Turk: Our problem right now, especially in the non-construction trades, is that we don't have employers who are prepared to take on apprentices. We have a number of school boards that have set up school workplace apprenticeship programs to provide young people an opportunity to get into the workplace who can't find places. We can talk all we want about the German model. It presumes there are employers who are prepared to have apprentices, and that's not our experience.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you, Jim. It's nice to see you back. I think it's a really useful way to spend time here to hear your views, because you have, as you said, spent enormous time in thinking about these issues.

Picking up on your last comments, I think it's appropriate to recall that this is Heritage Week and that we in Canada have our particular heritage which we have to build on. It's useful to look at other examples to see where we can learn from them, but we've got to deal with issues that are here. One of the aspects of our heritage is a particular relationship between business and labour that has evolved over the years. I'm just wondering how you see OTAB fitting into that heritage and whether you think it's going to be significant as far as leading to more cooperative relationships in the workplace.

1100

Mr Signorette: I guess from that perspective we really see it being useful, because we think it's a kind of cooperative model. It's like a bargaining unit process. We think that's useful in that process and we think that should be

expanded. It's been a useful process over the years in our country. The labour movement and the business community may have been at odds with one another from time to time but, by and large, when push came to shove, they were both able to sit down and work problems out. I think we see with OTAB that sort of thing happening and we hope it just expands.

Mr Gary Wilson: In other words, in our heritage it's not just adversarial parts of it. There are also cooperative things that have happened in the past that we can build on as well.

Mr Signoretti: But there are a lot of cooperative parts to it. For example, I was reading Mr Surplis's remarks the other day that he made for COCA, and if you read about these remarks here, he's basically talking about how they really got a shafting with that whole process. I think that's the political process that takes place after, because we say the same thing, "We got shafted." But the reality of it is that they would not agree to this process if they didn't see it was a valuable process.

In all the years I've been in negotiation—maybe Jim has too—you get two people or two partners working out an agreement that's something they can live with. They're not happy with all the parts of it. Jim mentioned earlier that with a lot of things with the training they're not happy with specific parts of it, but then again, it's something you say, "Well, we can live with that and we'll just build and work from there."

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm also interested to hear then whether you think there will something of substantial difference that involves—well, we call them consumers. I guess this is just asking for more elaboration. The people who are going to be using the training and needing it are actually going to be making decisions about the training, how it should be provided and how it should be shaped. I wonder whether you think that is going to lead to any long-term change and even maybe some social benefits that speak to the social issues we're trying to address in this legislation.

Mr Turk: I think, as we tried to indicate in our initial presentation to you, the advantage of having the diversity of people who'll be sitting around the table there is that we're dealing with an issue of scarcity. The amount of training money that's publicly available can't and can never begin to meet the needs, so the question is, what is the best use we can make of these relatively limited dollars, given the huge training needs in this province? To bring business and labour and the equity groups and the educators together to say, "How do we make these tough decisions?" is going to be so important.

It's not going to be so important at the level of whether Ford or General Motors or General Electric or the CAW gets a particular grant application. It's the bigger question of, if we have \$200 million for training employed workers, what are our priorities? Is it leading-edge industries? Is it major industries that are undergoing reorganization? Is it dying industries? There isn't enough money for all of those. We have to make some hard choices, so bringing those diverse voices into that decision-making process

should help make at least better informed and more widely acceptable decisions.

Mr Gary Wilson: I guess too our emphasis is on the public interest that we're asking each of the representatives to come with, which I guess touches on the idea that organized labour should be naming the labour reps. As I think you've made very clear, they're not just representing themselves certainly, but all working interests in general, which of course labour has had long experience in arguing for. Issues like minimum wage, for instance, medicare, child care issues have all been addressed by organized labour. The question then is the public interest that is served by this, and I think that's another aspect that you say comes from involving the people who are going to be using the training.

Mr Turk: That was the point we certainly made in our initial presentation to you, that training is an issue on which there are wide differences. It is a political issue. There isn't such a thing as a neutral position on training. The kinds of discussions that went on between business and labour in drafting the mandate for OTAB, where business started with the position that it's to build the international competitive capability of Canadian business and labour started with the position that it's to help working people and potential workers become full participants in the economic and social life of Ontario. Those were two rather different starting points. What OTAB provides is a forum where a diversity of views can inform the ultimate decision. We think that, as we indicated before, will be a strength in this structure. We just hope that it gets moved along so the structure gets up and operating as soon as possible.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. I'd like to thank the Ontario Federation of Labour for coming back to visit with the committee again, and both of you for taking time out of what I'm sure is a very busy day to comply with the requests of the committee. Thank you very much for appearing this morning.

PROVINCIAL BUILDING AND CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL OF ONTARIO

The Vice-Chair: The next scheduled witnesses are from the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, if you would come forward.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, could I put a question on the record while they're coming forward? It's for the research people to look at. What is the intent of the government with regard to the local boards and remuneration? I want to know what the intent of the government is. Are they going to be paid? Do you know the answer to that question?

The Vice-Chair: No, I don't. Duly noted, and research will deal with the question.

Mrs Cunningham: I've had that question in London this week, so I need to know.

The Vice-Chair: If you could identify yourselves, please, and proceed with your presentation. You're allocated one half-hour. If you could leave some of that half-hour for

questions and answers from committee members, I know they'd appreciate it.

Mr Patrick Dillon: Thank you. My name is Patrick Dillon. I'm president of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario. With me this morning is Joseph Duffy, business manager of the building trades council. Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this morning. I'll get into the reading of the brief.

The Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario, the Council of Ontario Construction Associations and the Construction Employers Coordination Council of Ontario, being the umbrella organizations of labour and management in the construction industry, have solicited the views of our members and met in an effort to develop a consensus towards the OTAB proposal.

Before we can get into the concerns raised during our own consultations, we feel that it is extremely important for you to understand who we are, who and what we represent and how we differ from the other labour market partners. The easiest way to do this is for you to envision the following images: the SkyDome under construction in an unfinished state without its roof, seats and other amenities; a coil of steel being processed in a high-tech rolling mill; and finally, a hospital. As you picture these images, undoubtedly you can see that they are very different. The first image, of the unfinished SkyDome, represents us, the construction sector, the steel mill represents the manufacturing sector and the hospital represents the service sector. The required work skills for each of these environments are as different as the images by different groups of people.

The required work skills for each of these requirements are as different as the images you have formed. This is part of the reason why each of these sectors is represented by different groups of people. We represent those people who build every aspect of all types of buildings, structures and their contents. As well, construction trades continually maintain, repair, renovate and retrofit these buildings with the latest technology, apparatus and equipment.

In comparison to the other sectors, construction's workforce is ever-changing in size and duration, tends to be multi-employer rather than single-employer in nature and is subject to varying and extreme conditions. As such, the construction sector requires unique approaches to training, apprenticeship and adjustment that reflect its specific sectoral demands.

One of our primary concerns with OTAB at this stage revolves around the concept of apprenticeship training and related subissues. The construction sector has a long history of proactive investment and support in terms of private funding and on-the-job training opportunities for the training of its workforce. Effective and responsive programs have long been the backbone of our sector's success in this province. Ontario has traditionally produced an internationally recognized and envied quality construction workforce through the apprenticeship and training system presently in place under the Ministry of Skills Development's provincial advisory council structure. In fact, the World Economic Forum ranked our sector fifth in a field of 23 countries. By comparison, our industrial counterparts ranked 20th out of the same 23 countries. Our sector was

also praised by the Premier's Council on Economic Renewal report for its excellent approach to training, as it states:

"In many ways, Ontario's industrial apprenticeship system serves as a classic study of our inability to adapt our training system to meeting the changing needs of industry and the economy in general. The training of qualified tradespersons for the construction sector, on the other hand, has tended to follow a cooperative model in which employers and unions both take significant responsibility for training. This has generally not been the case in the industrial trades, where industry and labour have left the management of the system to government."

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We raise this point because OTAB, as you know, is a product of the Premier's Council. If you recall, the construction sector was not asked to participate in this process because (1) the construction sector was seen to be functioning effectively and the Premier's Council was focusing on weaknesses in the economy, and (2) the differences between sectors was not realized. This exclusion from the process removed the construction sector from any meaningful input into OTAB until after such critical issues as the makeup of the board had been established.

This exclusion comes despite the recognition that the construction sector in the discussion paper Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership in Ontario was also seen to be successful in the field of apprenticeship training:

"Successful cooperation between business and labour is already evident in some areas where the use of apprenticeship is dominant. The construction sector is an example of an effective labour-management partnership, where considerable consensus already exists on the value and nature of apprenticeship as the preferred approach to skills development.

"It is important that where consensus like this now exists, it is preserved and supported. OTAB should provide such sectors the latitude and flexibility to enable their unique needs to determine their own training priorities."

In terms of absolute numbers involved in apprenticeship training, the construction industry is the largest single group, representing somewhere in the neighbourhood of 48% of all apprentices. This compares to 8% in service-related apprenticeships, 28% in motive power apprenticeships and 17% in industrial-related apprenticeships. If you combine these last two points, it becomes evident that our sector has been training more people than the other sectors and has consistently trained our workforce to meet the needs of the economy.

The makeup of the OTAB board concerns us because it does not reflect our established competence in the field of training or recognize our numbers involved in apprenticeship programs. Although we have been asked to submit a name for the OTAB board, the legislation presently does not ensure any representation by the construction sector.

There may be several ways in which to allow the construction sector to continue its success in meeting the demands of the future. One is to allow for an exemption for the construction sector, as we already have with regard to WCB and the health and safety legislation and, I could point out, in the Ontario Labour Relations Act also. We

realize, however, that this is not a viable option and that we can be an asset to OTAB, particularly with regard to our expertise in apprenticeship training.

Another option would be equal representation from the construction, manufacturing and service sectors for both labour and management. An equal voice would at least give construction a meaningful opportunity to provide input on the programs that have allowed the construction sector in this province to become a world leader.

In conclusion, we would like to state that we are not totally against the concept and philosophy behind OTAB. There is a great deal of potential for the development of a training culture and the cultivation of a cooperative spirit between labour and management. The construction sector has, for the most part, developed and thrived following a similar formula. It is imperative, however, that the construction sector be given a fair and equitable forum which will be able to respond quickly and effectively to change and future demands.

The Acting Chair (Mr Kimble Sutherland): Thank you, Mr Duffy and Mr Dillon. We'll start with the government side for questioning. We have approximately five or five-and-a-half minutes each. Mr Martin.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I guess what jumps out at me in this paper and gives me some sense of at least feeling that we have something here that's valuable is, number one, your experience of labour relations in the province. Very clearly, according to your presentation and in fact from having heard from the construction trades industry, there has developed a good relationship over the years and you've been able to work together to resolve common concerns and difficulties.

It's been suggested sometimes during these hearings that in fact that kind of cooperation is almost impossible to achieve, that somehow labour and management are not going to be able to work together and that we're dreaming in even using that as sort of a foundation upon which to build a particular approach.

Recognizing that you have some difficulty with the makeup, which is, it seems to me, your biggest criticism of this whole thing, might you perhaps share with us a bit more how, if we do not find it possible to change the makeup of this board, you might be able to participate, given that you have one position under the present model that's being put forth and the promise by the OFL that there will be one other within its grouping to represent your interests? Do you see some hope for what we hope is a cooperative venture that will be in the best interests of training for the province?

Mr Dillon: I'd like to respond to that. First off, you're quite right in that labour and management in the construction industry for apprenticeship programs have a long history of mutual agreement and understanding on training issues and there is no adversarial approach whatsoever to training. We don't believe that's been the case in the industrial and service sectors. Because somebody's putting OTAB together, does that mean that all of a sudden those people involved in the industrial and service sectors are all going to jump on to this more cooperative approach?

If they're not, because of our representation on the board, the construction sector can't ensure we're going to have the programs down the road that we have now. In fact, the programs we have now need to be changed presently, and we can't do that if we get caught up in a political battle between labour and management of the other workplace partners.

I think OTAB is starting to lead us in that direction, but the construction industry has to be in tune with what's happening today and tomorrow and we can't take chances on being caught up in what other—you know, while other groups in the workplace develop programs to come along, we can't be held up.

That's why we have some major concern about the representation, and some people say our approach here for the representation is strictly political. I would like to just allay that thought out there completely. That is one thing the construction history has a long history of, making sure that politics, or the adversarial approach, stays out of training—and safety, for that matter.

The Acting Chair: Mr Wilson, you have about a minute and a half.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks for your presentation, and nice to see you again, Pat.

Mr Dillon: Nice to see you, Gary.

Mr Gary Wilson: I just wanted to follow up on that theme because, of course, one of our hopes is that the model of cooperation that has evolved in the construction industry will carry over into the larger society and the influence of the representatives from the construction industry will have the kind of influence that will lead to more cooperation. There is a recognition, I think, that it has driven the cooperation in the construction industry, that you have to work together, partly out of safety but also out of economic matters too. There are strong incentives to build that.

We've heard from presentations that already, just by bringing people together, things have developed that show where the bases of cooperation lie, that there can be good things coming from that. Things that weren't recognized before that affected the different groups were seen, once they were brought together, to have common interests and one of them is the need for good training. We expect that will be one of the strong factors.

I just wonder whether you've got some suggestions about how the experience from the construction industry can carry over into OTAB and indeed into the local boards to, I guess, aid the cooperative intent.

Mr Dillon: It may be a little difficult to answer your question because we're not involved in the industrial and I don't pretend to be an expert on the industrial or service sector type of apprenticeships. But certainly our model is world-renowned and I believe we could be and would like to be of assistance to the industrial and service sector as it relates to apprenticeship. We do some other training, journeyman upgrading and all that kind of stuff also.

The major thing that needs to happen for apprenticeships to be successful in the other sectors, the one key

thing, is to set aside the politics and get the adversarial approach completely out of apprenticeship training. It has to be something both parties see, that their future exists because of the training that's going to be there. That's the construction industry for sure. Everything is very, very competitive and on a contract-by-contract basis, which means a daily basis for us, and if we're caught up in some political battle over a training issue, the contractor won't be getting the job.

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Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation today. I found it very refreshing, because here we have organized labour speaking to OTAB and bringing up many of the concerns that other people have brought up. I especially find it refreshing that you speak to the point that we have to get the partisanship and the politics out of this. I think that's the problem with the heavy representation of the OFL, because the OFL is also perceived to have a political agenda, and the building trades are seen to be just a mechanism that organizes for the benefit of workers but has no other agenda than that.

I think you bring up a very good point. What I've been saying is that with this agenda, what we're doing is creating the same sort of adversarial type of relationship on a board that we've seen out there with different labour-management disputes in this province. So what we've really done with OTAB is brought all the people together who don't work together very well. We're giving them all responsibility for training, we're going to give them a pile of money to do it and we're just going to cross our fingers and hope they're going to get along and it's all going to work.

I think we're giving them one of the most important aspects of the redevelopment of the Ontario economy; that is, to get people skills. So I think you bring up a good point there and I am sympathetic to your suggestion. I'm not sure I would go so far as to reflect exactly the board component composition that you bring forward, but one quick question would be, what percentage of workers in Ontario is in the construction industry? Of all workers in Ontario, what percentage is involved in construction? Do you have a rough idea?

Mr Joseph Duffy: There'd be at least a quarter of a million people in the construction industry; that's in businesses related to construction.

Mr Ramsay: But you don't have that in percentage terms in regard to the whole labour force?

Mr Duffy: No. I'd like to address your first remarks. In regard to cooperation, I must say that cooperation didn't come to construction overnight. There were many years of toil and trouble before we got to the position we are in. I think both labour and management in the construction industry realized that not only the employer's future is in our hands, but our future is in the hands of the employer, so we've had to come together.

Mr Ramsay: I just have one other quick question, because I want to defer to my colleague Mr Offer, who's got a question about funding. What are we going to do about your system when it comes to OTAB? Right now,

your system works very well. Even though you said here you didn't think it was practical, are you recommending, in a sense, that you should really be left alone?

I'm concerned that OTAB may want to change your system. Here we have one aspect of the economy that works very well in regard to training. How would you see yourself fitting in so we can maintain your system which is working well?

Mr Duffy: I think that's our major concern, that our system is working well. We don't seem to have any problems in regard to our apprenticeship programs. Someone mentioned earlier about employment equity. We are addressing that fact. That seemed to be a concern with people in the construction industry. We are addressing that right now. We're working with the government.

To leave it in the hands of other people to decide what the construction industry is going to do later on down the road just puts concerns up and down our industry, both labour and management. The problem with exemptions is that our industry for years has been fighting against exemptions. We said earlier that we have different rules for the Workers' Compensation Board for construction. We have different rules in the Ontario Labour Relations Board. We're not covered by the Employment Standards Act. As a council of the provincial building trades, we have got to the point where we say, "If you're going to bring in government legislation, we want to be covered by that government legislation."

Here we are saying: "Now we're concerned about the idea of being involved in government government legislation. Let's take a look at exempting us, because our industry is running good and our apprenticeship programs are good."

The Acting Chair: A very quick question, Mr Offer.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. You've spoken about your history in training. You spoke about the shared funding responsibility and you used the word in terms of private funding and on-the-job training opportunities. I'm asking this question because we have some questions and concerns as to where the funding for this agency is going to come from. I believe we've been informed that it's the new schedule 4 agency and we have a cabinet approval of what the schedule 4 agency is. It says that the funding is intended to be completely funded out of the revenue generated from their programs. If this is going to be a schedule 4 agency and this is the cabinet document which speaks to where the revenue is going to come from, could you share with us your experience as to how you have received your funding for training and how you would see the OTAB agency getting its funding?

Mr Dillon: We have received our funding in a number of different ways over the years, some through the Ministry of Skills Development, and a good portion of it is provided by a joint effort between labour and management. I don't know that everybody is convinced as to how the funding is going to come for OTAB, as I see it, since the failure of the referendum, and the federal party seems to be holding back on funding. Is all the funding going to come through OTAB? For sure, I don't know the answer to

that and if somebody here does, I would certainly like to be convinced of that.

If it does come through OTAB, I guess the major reason we can't get off this representation issue is that if it comes through there and we don't have a reasonable voice on that board, and politics become more important than training, then the construction industry can have its funds reduced and away go a lot of programs.

The Acting Chair: Okay. I'm afraid we're going to have to move on here. Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you, Mr Chairman. First of all, I'd like to congratulate you on your track record with regard to training 48% of the apprentices in Ontario. I can tell you that over the weekend, in talking to young people, they wish there were many more openings for apprenticeship training. These were young people in secondary schools who cannot find the opportunities.

I was interested in Mr Wilson's question, when he talked to you about wanting your influence and your cooperation based on your experience, so I know he is aware of it as well and I'm sure he's listening carefully. You weren't alone. The Mechanical Contractors Association, Local 46, made a presentation that was invaluable, I think, to the committee. As well, you should know the one made on January 19 by the Council of Ontario Construction Associations, so we're glad to see that you've rescheduled.

It's extremely important to us: What do you think is the makeup of the labour section of the board now, because in the act itself it just says that one of the chairs should represent labour and that seven directors represent labour? How do you read what will happen? We don't have any more direction than that. What is your understanding now?

Mr Duffy: Our understanding, from speaking to people inside some of the organizations, is that there is one designated from the provincial building trades. We have been told that out of the other seven, there's a possibility the OFL or the appointed representatives will select one of the groups of unions, within the construction industry, that are affiliated with the OFL, that another representative from our organization within its group would be selected there. On the other six, we're not sure. I guess that'll be up to the OFL, the people who are supposed to be appointing them. What industry they'll come from we're not sure.

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Mrs Cunningham: I know you said you want to get on with it, and so do the representatives before the committee. The people who are coming before the committee are telling us that education isn't represented, but we'll leave that for now, because the OFL assured us that within the labour group and business group, education would be represented. I can assure you the educators don't feel good about that.

You talk about industrial needs, service sector needs and construction needs in apprenticeship training. If you could name the eight seats—or maybe we should have more; nine—do you see us taking those three groups as being the key groups for training with regard to expertise, need, direction or whatever? How would you make this representation if somebody asked you just to do it?

Mr Dillon: We have submitted briefs in the past on three from each sector—the construction, industrial and service sectors—not necessarily based on expertise, especially from the other two sectors, the industrial and service sectors, but I think they need fair representation. As we go along, the construction industry—not just the building trades but the construction industry itself—is quite willing to help with our expertise in apprenticeship training to help bring up the industrial and service sectors, which are rated 20th out of the 23 countries. We do not want to be put in a position where we help bring those two sectors from 20th to 15th by bringing us from fifth to 10th.

Mrs Cunningham: Exactly.

Mr Dillon: We want to remain fifth or become fourth, third, second or first and help them come from 20th to 10th or eighth or whatever. To do that fairly, in the long haul, requires equal representation from the sectors and is not necessarily based on expertise at the start.

The Acting Chair: I think we're going to have to leave it there.

Mrs Cunningham: Four minutes?

The Acting Chair: No, it was five. Mr Offer stretched his time. I tried to be accommodating, but we have to move on to the next presentation. You had five minutes, Ms Cunningham.

Mr Turnbull: Mr Chair, in fairness, I believe the NDP had significantly longer.

The Acting Chair: No.

Interjection.

Mrs Cunningham: I beg your pardon?

The Acting Chair: Excuse me. I tried to balance it. It's not going to be a perfect match.

Mrs Cunningham: But you didn't balance it.

The Acting Chair: I want to thank Mr Dillon and Mr Duffy for their presentation today. Your input is valued, and we appreciate your coming before the committee.

Mr Dillon: We thank you.

ASSOCIATION INTERCULTURELLE FRANCO-ONTARIENNE

The Acting Chair: Our next group presenting is l'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne, Chris Nair, président. Please come forward.

Mrs Cunningham: Are you going to give us more time on the next one? Is that what you're going to do?

The Acting Chair: We'll try and make sure everything works out and people get their questions asked. Please begin.

Mrs Cunningham: That was the wrong response.

M. Chris Nair : Monsieur le Président, membres du comité, bonjour. Mon nom est Chris Nair. Je suis le président de l'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne.

Au nom de l'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne, des associations et des communautés ethnoculturelles franco-ontariennes membres, nous tenons à vous remercier de nous avoir donné l'occasion de faire une

deuxième présentation orale et écrite au sujet de la formation et de l'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

Mrs Cunningham: We can't make it out. Perhaps you'll give us some time to get plugged in.

The Acting Chair: Sure.

Mr Gary Wilson: Number one? There's nothing happening—

Mrs Cunningham: Did you just discover that now?

The Acting Chair: Okay, are we ready? Please continue.

M. Nair : Au nom de l'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne —are you going to subtract my time now?

The Acting Chair: No, keep going.

Mrs Cunningham: Just mine.

M. Nair : Au nom de l'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne, des associations et des communautés ethnoculturelles franco-ontariennes membres, nous tenons à vous remercier de nous avoir donné l'occasion de faire une deuxième présentation orale et écrite au sujet de la formation et de l'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre, et tout particulièrement sur le projet de loi 96 concernant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre, le COFAM.

Avant d'entrer au coeur du débat, j'aimerais brièvement vous rappeler ce que nous sommes et ce que nous représentons.

L'AIFO est un organisme parapluie à but non lucratif. L'AIFO regroupe et représente d'une façon légitime les droits et intérêts des associations et des communautés ethnoculturelles francophones. Nous voulons préserver notre héritage culturel et en même temps nous intégrer et nous épanouir dans la francophonie et la société ontarienne et, de ce fait, les renforcer et les enrichir.

L'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne de l'Ontario a participé dans le processus de consultation et de revendication touchant les dossiers chauds de l'actualité ontarienne : éducation, équité d'emploi, antiracisme, collèges francophones, culture, constitution, formation professionnelle, immigration et d'autres.

Nous pouvons résumer les principaux objectifs de l'AIFO dans les points suivants : faciliter et promouvoir l'intégration de nos communautés au sein de la société ontarienne, et plus particulièrement au sein de la communauté franco-ontarienne ; oeuvrer pour l'acceptation et l'insertion de nos communautés respectives par la communauté franco-ontarienne et la sensibiliser au fait interculturel ; collaborer étroitement avec les communautés et les organismes franco-ontariens dans tous les domaines d'intérêt général.

Nous visons donc l'étroite collaboration entre nos membres, les organismes et la communauté franco-ontarienne. Notre devise : «Pour une vision commune, unissons-nous.»

L'AIFO est partie prenante de la francophonie ontarienne, nos membres doublement minoritaires, c'est-à-dire appartenant aux deux catégories suivantes : d'une part, la minorité linguistique que représente la francophonie en

Ontario, et d'autre part, la minorité ethnique visible dont nous sommes fiers.

La majorité de notre communauté ne parle qu'une seule langue des deux langues officielles du Canada, à savoir le français. La communauté ethnoculturelle francophone subit des injustices systématiques faites à l'égard des francophones et des groupes ethnoculturels. Ces injustices bloquent tout développement socio-économique de notre communauté. Notre communauté espère atteindre un niveau socio-économique respectant les normes de la vie canadienne. Cet espoir ne se réalisera pas sans le respect et la mise en application des politiques de l'équité et de l'antiracisme, ainsi que les revendications de la communauté francophone de l'Ontario dans sa diversité.

Nous sommes ainsi minoritaires et par la langue et par l'origine ethnoculturelle. Cependant, nous nous considérons alliés de la francophonie ontarienne parce que nos membres ont fait un choix, celui de vivre en français en Ontario.

La communauté ethnoculturelle francophone est formée d'une forte proportion de personnes hautement qualifiées : des diplômés et diplômées des universités et des collèges canadiens et d'autres. Malheureusement, ces talents n'ont pas eu la chance de faire bénéficier les entreprises ontariennes de leur savoir-faire et de son application. Pour éviter les prestations sociales, ces personnes sont forcées de choisir des emplois sous-évalués. D'autres personnes cherchent à se perfectionner dans des domaines qui suivent la fine pointe de la technologie. Malheureusement, le manque d'établissements francophones de technologie ne permet pas de réaliser leurs espoirs, même étant diplômés des établissements anglophones de technologie, leur chance de trouver un emploi répondant à leurs qualifications est minime.

Maintenant, je vous passe Ali Maachar, qui va faire la suite de notre position.

M. Ali Maachar : Monsieur le Président, messieurs et mesdames, l'AIFO est désireuse de bien suivre l'évolution de ce projet de loi 96 concernant le COFAM. Nous aimerions qu'elle redresse l'inéquité dont souffrent les membres de nos communautés, qu'elle nous facilite l'accès à des professions et une pleine intégration et participation dans la vie de notre province.

Dans les cinq dernières années, la province de l'Ontario a vécu et vit encore une période très difficile de récession. Celle-ci a affecté énormément toutes les composantes motrices — entreprises et leurs travailleuses et travailleurs — de l'économie de notre province. Les résultats de cette récession sont la fermeture des usines et des services et l'augmentation du taux de chômage, et en conséquence, des problèmes sociaux chez les Ontariennes et Ontariens, et plus particulièrement chez notre communauté.

Pour relancer son économie, l'Ontario ne peut plus uniquement compter sur les compétences et les talents qui l'ont servi jusqu'ici, mais en plus, il doit envisager d'autres solutions plus efficaces. Le succès de la relance économique de notre province dépend de plusieurs facteurs, parmi lesquels le savoir et son application, la naissance des industries pouvant s'appuyer sur des femmes et des hommes hautement qualifiés, bien instruits et bien rémunérés, et sur

une compétitivité mondiale, sur une concurrence et une application de l'équité sociale et de l'antiracisme. Le respect de l'équité sociale et de l'antiracisme permettra une élimination des obstacles systématiques qui contribuent à l'exclusion et la marginalisation des groupes cibles comme le nôtre, et en conséquence une participation active de leurs compétences et de leurs talents dans le processus de la relance économique de notre province.

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Le gouvernement en place a proposé que l'Ontario entreprenne de vastes et radicales réformes de son régime de mise en valeur de la main-d'œuvre et a reconnu que la clef de l'avenir réside dans une collaboration entre employeur, travailleuses et travailleurs, éducatrices et éducateurs, formatrices et formateurs et représentantes et représentants des groupements d'intervention sociocommunautaires. Pour ces fins, le gouvernement ontarien a mis en place le COFAM.

La communauté ethnoculturelle francophone voit dans la création du COFAM un moyen qui pourra assurer son épanouissement et celui de la province de l'Ontario. L'AIFO supporte fermement l'idée de la constitution du COFAM. Elle souhaite qu'avec son établissement, notre province reprendra le flambeau de la prospérité économique nationale et de la compétitivité au niveau global. Pour que nous demeuriions compétitifs à l'échelle nationale et internationale, il nous faut former et ajuster d'une façon constante et régulière la main-d'œuvre aux besoins spécifiques de notre province pour qu'elle reste à la fine pointe de l'avancement de la technologie.

Ce point est d'une grande importance pour nos membres qui ont besoin de la formation et de l'ajustement afin de s'intégrer dans nos marchés canadiens. En brisant les barrières de la justice sociale et en impliquant toutes les composantes de la population ontarienne dans le processus de développement économique et technologique de l'Ontario, la communauté ethnoculturelle francophone est prête, comme elle l'était dans ses principes, à relever le défi et à travailler pour la prospérité économique et sociale de notre province. Seule la communauté ethnoculturelle francophone est capable de reconnaître et d'exprimer ses propres besoins spécifiques puisqu'elle est doublement minoritaire. Pour cela, l'AIFO recommande que le projet de loi 96, sa réglementation et les membres du corps dirigeant du COFAM assurent et respectent notre participation directe dans les conseils adjoints au corps dirigeant, dans les commissions locales et dans la structure administrative du COFAM.

L'AIFO recommande aussi la création d'une direction francophone gérée par et pour les franco-ontariennes et franco-ontariens dans leur diversité au sein du COFAM, et qu'un budget soit alloué à cette direction pour répondre aux besoins des francophones en matière de formation et de l'ajustement de sa main-d'œuvre.

À cette fin, nous reconnaissons que la création des établissements postsecondaires francophones facilitera l'acheminement de la formation et de l'ajustement de la main-d'œuvre francophone.

The Acting Chair: I forget to ask, for the purposes of Hansard, that both of you introduce yourselves, so if you could just state your names and your positions now for Hansard so we have that on the record, that would be terrific.

Mr Nair: My name is Chris Nair. I'm the president of l'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne.

M. Maachar : Mon nom est Ali Maachar. Je suis membre fondateur de l'AIFO et je représente la communauté ethnoculturelle francophone au comité directeur sur COFAM.

The Acting Chair: Thank you.

M. Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa-Sud): Thank you. Merci pour votre présentation.

J'ai de la difficulté à comprendre exactement votre vision pour COFAM et comment ça va marcher pour faire certain que la francophonie ici en Ontario sera bien représentée. Est-ce que vous pouvez parler un peu de cela, s'il vous plaît ?

M. Nair : J'ai vu dans la composition des membres qui vont siéger qu'il y a des personnes dans l'industrie, des syndicats, des hommes, des femmes, des handicapés, des anglophones, des francophones. Peut-être, lorsque le projet de loi a été conçu, on a oublié que dans notre province il y a les deux peuples fondateurs, c'est-à-dire les deux langues officielles, l'anglais et le français, et vous avez reconnu à l'intérieur qu'il y a des minorités visibles. Il y a les anglais minoritaires visibles qui parlent l'anglais qui sont représentés. Vous avez oublié qu'il y a notre minorité visible, c'est-à-dire la minorité visible francophone.

Nous sommes fiers qu'il y ait un francophone qui est représenté, mais nous aurions aimé, nous comme francophones également minorités visibles, d'être là à la table pour défendre nos droits, comme vous les membres d'ici, comme nous les Canadiens n'allons pas demander aux Américains de défendre les intérêts des Canadiens, quoique nous sommes des Nord-Américains. Nous ne disons pas que cette personne francophone qui va être là-bas va nous défendre ; cest peut-être la raison pourquoi nous avons demandé qu'il y ait un organisme qui a des francophones pour nous, qui vont siéger, qui vont pouvoir nous comprendre, nous les francophones. C'est ce dont on a besoin pour nous représenter à l'intérieur du COFAM. On ne demande pas un autre secteur du COFAM, séparément ; on demande qu'il y ait à l'intérieur du COFAM, et qu'on nous donne, à nous les francophones, nos outils nécessaires pour l'épanouissement de notre communauté. C'est nous qui comprenons les besoins de notre communauté.

Il y a un aspect qui a été négligé : celui de la communauté francophone visible. Il y un anglophone, mais la francophonie, est-ce que l'Ontario a changé maintenant ? C'est pour cette raison que le rapport Lewis est venu corriger une partie des lacunes dans l'Ontario. Si nous voulons corriger à l'avenir — nous sommes en train de réparer une faille qui est dans notre société. C'est maintenant l'occasion, à travers le COFAM, de corriger ça. Vous avez l'occasion, Monsieur le Président et membres du comité, de saisir l'occasion et de corriger cette lacune. Il ne faut pas attendre dix ans, quinze ans et dire : « Mon Dieu, si j'avais

su, j'aurais pu le faire maintenant.» C'est l'occasion maintenant de le faire.

Nous sommes une société grandissante ; nous allons grandir. On ne peut pas nous arrêter maintenant. On est là, on va grandir. Il faut nous donner les instruments à nous les francophones pour nous épanouir ici. Et si vous voyez plus loin, partout et depuis longtemps il y a une certaine minorité qui est exploitée. L'expérience mondiale nous a démontré qu'en Russie, là il y a une minorité qui a été écrasée, on oublie peut-être, sans qu'on ne voulait le faire directement. Mais comme on le voit, il y a des ethniques, des Arméniens du monde qu'on a essayé d'écraser. Les Russes ont essayé de les écraser. Maintenant, lorsqu'ils sont libres, qu'est-ce qui arrive ? Il y a toujours des escarmouches. On ne veut pas non plus que cette minorité qui a été écrasée — on a vu l'exemple d'Oka à Montréal — lorsqu'une minorité a été écrasée, lorsqu'ils veulent avoir le pouvoir, qu'est-ce qui arrive si l'on ne donne pas les outils nécessaires à ces personnes pour les laisser se développer ? On a vu les résultats à Los Angeles, et les résultats ici à Toronto, on les connaît. Je ne dis pas que cela va arriver ici en Ontario, mais je dis qu'il y a ces guérillas. Donc, il faut prévoir que nous, une minorité, si on essaie de nous abandonner d'un côté, le résultat c'est que c'est la province qui va perdre et le Canada entier qui va perdre.

Mr Turnbull: Do I understand you correctly, that you feel it isn't sufficient to have a francophone and somebody who represents visible minorities on the board?

M. Nair : Monsieur le Président, je vais répondre.

Est-ce que vous seriez d'accord d'être représenté par un membre du gouvernement ? Vous êtes blanc, il est blanc ; est-ce que tous les blancs sont pareils ? Non. «Ce n'est pas parce qu'on est Anglais — on a nos identités nous-mêmes.» Nous autres, ce qu'on veut dire, c'est que les Anglais ont d'autres façons de se représenter.

Au Canada, il y a deux peuples et il y a deux langues officielles, l'anglais et le français. Le français, eux ils vont le défendre. Nous autres, on ne fait pas partie de cette francophonie. C'est pour cette raison que l'on dit au minimum, qu'on nous donne à nous, les francophones, nos instruments, un budget à nous, des francophones, pour nous diriger nous-mêmes à l'intérieur, et là on va voir comment on va répartir, parce qu'il y a un seul francophone. Il va essayer de défendre les intérêts de la francophonie, je comprends bien. Mais qu'est-ce qui arrive à nous autres ? Est-ce qu'on n'est pas un peuple, on n'est pas ici ?

Il y a un représentant de la minorité visible d'anglophones qui est là. Est-ce que ça comprend les francophones ? Non. Si vous dites que l'anglophone peut représenter les francophones et les minorités visibles, donc pourquoi avez-vous choisi un représentant des travailleurs, un anglophone, un francophone ? Pourquoi tous ceux-là ? Cela justifie que nous autres aussi, on doit avoir notre représentation pour représenter et défendre les intérêts de notre communauté.

Ali va en rajouter là-dessus un peu.

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M. Maachar : Je vais le dire en français. L'idée de COFAM, quand il est sorti, il y avait des groupes qui se

sont formés. Le comité ethnoculturel francophone a choisi le côté francophone. Donc, on a travaillé ensemble. On a travaillé ensemble soit aux tables rondes, dans le processus de consultations, mais quand même c'est que notre intérêt — on a travaillé dans le processus de la nomination d'une personne dans le corps dirigeant, mais ça nous intéresse plus, en tant que francophones ethnoculturels, d'être dans le conseil, d'avoir un représentant au moins dans le conseil — on ne cherche pas à aller plus loin — parce que notre communauté ne cesse pas de grandir. Notre communauté choisit le français comme langue et notre communauté subit la discrimination en tant que francophones et en tant qu'ethnoculturels.

Je suis d'accord avec Monsieur le Président, Chris Nair, et ce qu'il a dit, mais ce que nous cherchons dans tout ce processus c'est une présence dans le conseil.

Mr Turnbull: Let me just explore this a little bit further. I'm not trying to be unsympathetic to your position; I'm just trying to understand. It seems to me that the reason, the thrust of why there should be a francophone on the board and why there should be on the board somebody representing visible minorities is because they both represent a particular aspect of life. One is the linguistic aspect of life and the other is the challenges that people from visible minorities have to face as an everyday fact.

Ultimately—and not just OTAB—but if we carried this through with all aspects of government to the extent that we represent every nuance—and I hope that doesn't sound unsympathetic when I portray what you're saying as a nuance, the fact that you do have that representation but it isn't combined in one person—if we carried that principle forward, I suppose we could have governments where we would have a vast number of members of the Legislative Assembly who would represent these people. If you went to proportional representation, then you would have to have an enormous government.

For example, I know of many people who are currently represented by NDP members as their local member. They're not exactly bowled over by the idea, but nevertheless that's the way our democracy works. The highest number of people in that particular area have voted for NDP and therefore it represents them, and within the total picture, you hope that you still get a representation of attitudes.

To the extent that the NDP represents people in my area who don't feel that I'm totally sympathetic to the NDP position, and maybe I represent people in their areas who don't feel that the NDP is sympathetic to their views, and we get visible minorities elected, albeit not enough, that's my concern.

The Acting Chair: Mr Turnbull, we're going to have to give them a chance to respond and then move on, okay?

Mr Turnbull: Yes. Thank you.

Mr Nair: I anticipated that question, the same thing that we were saying before: Can men not represent women in this country? Are we men the only ones who can take over the destiny of this country? We have found now that women are capable of doing that. It was an old cliché

before that we can do better for women. Now we find that women can do better. Give them the chance.

Mr Turnbull: But that wasn't what I was saying, with all due respect.

Mr Nair: I'm coming to your question, sir. Give them the chance. I know this is not a government body and this is not an elected body; these are appointments made by politicians. If it was to be like that, then let it be like that. You are choosing the people for a future. You're trying to correct an inequity here to be far better. The government has a good idea. I applaud the government for that. That's an excellent idea.

This doesn't mean that sometimes we do something and some advisers do not abide by the minister, correctly or incorrectly. Maybe they have not seen us around there because, like Zanana Akande said, we are visible and yet we are invisible. That's the point I also want to make here. We want ourselves to be participating in that way.

Sometimes things go before a judge. You go in the first court and the judge is wrong. You go in the second court, in the Supreme Court of Ontario, and the judge is wrong. Then you go up to the Supreme Court of Canada. Maybe some advice had been given to the minister which is not correct. They have not seen some opportunities.

What we are trying to do here—you've got the golden opportunity, sir, to correct that inequality here. If you want all the people of Ontario to prosper, we have to be included. The French people are not the same. We are people but we are not the same as the English. We have our own ways of looking at things. We have to have our own tools for us to develop our own things.

Mr Turnbull: But let me—

The Acting Chair: I'm sorry, Mr Turnbull and Mr Nair, I'm just going to ask you to conclude so that we can move on to the other party for questioning.

Mr Turnbull: Just very quickly—

The Acting Chair: No, I'm sorry. I can't allow that due to time restraints, okay? We're going to have to move on. Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks a lot, Mr Chair, and thank you for your presentation. I found the issues you've raised fascinating. I think, as you suggested at one point, that OTAB can't be expected to do everything, that it's an appointed body dealing with training issues.

I would like you to elaborate perhaps on where the multicultural francophone community has been left out of training issues that you feel now still won't be addressed through the representation that has been provided through a representative of the francophone community on the board, as well as a representative from the visible minority community, as well as the public interest nature of the board itself, to take into account issues you've raised where discrimination exists in our society and to deal with that, again recognizing, though, that issues of training can't deal with all the social issues that face it. But certainly where discrimination, I guess, affects training issues, then OTAB would deal with that.

What are some of the issues that the multicultural francophone community suffers from the present training

procedures that you are worried won't be addressed by the representation that is foreseen coming from the board as we propose it?

Mr Nair: I'm afraid this committee does the same thing as the old things before, "We know best what's good for you." If you go and see an unemployment line, if you go on welfare, you see people in our community who are over there, the majority of them, because in the department where people make the decisions we are not represented. That's where the game is. Everybody thinks they know what's best for us. We are not there. How can they understand where we are? Where are we? We are in the hospitals, they say we are on welfare, that we don't want to work, that we are in the unemployment line. We don't want to be there. We don't want to beg. We don't want charity. We want to work.

In order for us to work, we have to ask somebody to understand us. Who is going to be there to say, "Yes, we understand you"? If there are three people, three white men, obviously no matter how good your intentions are, you will tend to favour one of your kind. I've been in a society like that. Humans are just like that. We tend to favour our brother, sister and so on.

If we have somebody over there, please have a group of francophones. If you give us a budget for the francophones, at least two or three, let us decide for ourselves, because collectively we are francophones. We have chosen to be like that and we are proud to be one, but we want our share in that one. We want our views to be expressed.

People can understand our side, the same steps you have taken to include women, to include labour, to include other ones, to include whites, to include the blacks, the same reason. We're not talking about religious diversities here to include everybody. We are just looking for one people to understand us. We have only one French person over there. We are afraid that these things can't be known. The intention is good. Those who are making the decisions, we are not there to make the decisions. Everybody's trying to make decisions for us. Let us have our representation there.

Mr Gary Wilson: Could you just focus then on where your training needs differ from those of the other members of the francophone community?

M. Maachar : Je n'ai pas compris.

Mr Gary Wilson: The difference for the multicultural francophone community, the training needs that you have that would be different from the francophone community in Ontario—you're worried about the representative ignoring your needs, as I understand it. You say you need your own because no one else can represent you properly because they don't see the needs through your eyes or through your experience.

M. Maachar : C'est que nous, on est dans un contexte francophone, mais dans la composante francophone, on veut être représentés en tant qu'ethnoculturels francophones. C'est tout ce qu'on cherche. C'est-à-dire, comme l'a dit tout à l'heure Chris Nair, c'est que notre taux de chômage existe dans notre communauté et le bien-être social a un taux élevé. Mais quand un politicien commence à déclarer, comme l'a fait dernièrement le ministre de l'Immigration

fédéral, c'est qu'on nous pointe comme si nous étions juste des gens qui cherchent le bien-être social et qui font des enfants, mais ce n'est pas cela. Ce n'est pas ça la communauté ethnoculturelle en général. C'est que nous avons des docteurs, nous avons des ingénieurs, nous avons des informaticiens, nous avons tout, mais on n'a pas de chances de participer. On nous bloque.

Donc, ce que nous demandons à vous, parce qu'on comprend mieux — moi, j'ai un doctorat en métallurgie et je suis en chômage, par exemple. J'ai participé à une «patent». Je me suis fait fourrer, par exemple, ici au Canada, dans un pays qu'on dit démocratique, et maintenant je suis en chômage. Je n'ai rien trouvé. Je sens mes problèmes et je sens les problèmes en tant que francophone et en tant qu'ethnoculturel. Je sens ces problèmes et les problèmes des autres.

Donc, notre participation dans les conseils, moi je ne veux pas être sur le «board». Non, avoir un siège dans les conseils, ça peut au moins faciliter un dialogue, une participation, une programmation, une vision dans l'avenir de l'Ontario et du Canada en général. Un ethnoculturel, ça ne veut pas dire qu'on n'ait pas un certain particularisme envers le Canada plus que les personnes d'origines, mais ce qu'on cherche, c'est notre participation aussi. On veut participer. On veut être là. On ne veut pas être marginalisés. Donc, c'est notre message, je pense.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think you made it very effectively and I think all the members of the committee have heard that clearly and are trying to develop the kind of structure, both at the provincial level and, as you say, at the community level, where the boards will represent the community characteristics.

M. Maachar : C'est ça. On ne veut pas aller plus loin. C'est que dans la prise de décisions, là où on va sentir qu'on peut dire quelque chose sur nos problèmes, on ne veut pas prendre le — non, c'est juste au niveau des conseils, au niveau des commissions locales. Je participe au Comité directeur francophone. Je participe là, je donne mes idées vis-à-vis de la communauté ethnoculturelle, mais on peut aller plus loin. Plus loin que ça, c'est au niveau des décisions.

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): The committee wants to express its gratitude to the Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne. Mr Nair, Mr Maachar, you've made a very valuable contribution to this committee's process. You obviously have provoked some interest in your submissions, and that's reflected in the types of exchanges that took place between members of the committee and you. We thank you kindly and trust that you'll continue to keep in touch and relay or communicate your views to us members of the committee individually or collectively. Thank you kindly, gentlemen.

ONTARIO SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS'
FEDERATION, DISTRICT 13, (NORTH YORK)

The Chair: While the next participant is coming forward, I want to express my apologies to the committee for being unable to be here at 10 this morning as a result of difficulties I encountered that were unavoidable.

I am very grateful to Mr Huget and Mr Sutherland for assisting in sitting in the chair, and I apologize to the mem-

bers of the committee or staff or participants who were in any way inconvenienced as a result of my unfortunate, unavoidable and regrettable tardiness this morning. Once again, my apologies.

Sir, please tell us who you are, what your title or status is. We've got your written submissions and they're going to form part of the record by virtue of being made an exhibit. You've got 30 minutes. Please try to save the second 15 minutes of that 30-minute time frame for questions and exchanges.

Mr Ross Floyd: I'm Ross Floyd. I'm a vice-president with the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation in District 13, and that's North York. I wish to take just a moment to put the context of why I'm appearing with you here.

At District 13 our members are all employees of the North York school board. We have 60,000 adolescents and some 100,000 adults in our continuing education program. We operate these in local schools, churches, community halls and libraries. We have more than 5,000 adult students participating in our literacy and numeracy programs. The English-as-a-second-language training, ESL, is presently offered to 25,000 adult learners.

North York's cooperative education program has 6,000 employers and places annually 3,000 students, both adolescent and adult. Since 1988, at the North York board and through OSSSTF members, we've operated 32 federal and provincial programs. These are all training programs. I cite these figures just to show you that we are major players in the adult training sector and we have a major interest in the course of this legislation.

Let me state at the outset that we firmly support the recommendations which were made to you by the School Boards Sector Working Group in its presentation to this committee on January 28. We support the concept of the OTAB and LTABs. However, we do have some considerations which bother us about the draft legislation.

The first one deals with accountability. If we're going to set up a training and adjustment board that is based upon appointed individuals, we're going to move away from representation by elected individuals. At the provincial level, we're going to take programs out of various ministries and give them to an independent board. At the local level, some of the programs we now control may be transferred out and therefore the elected school boards will not be controlling them any more. We're going to move from elected individuals to appointed individuals. The school boards operate on quite an open basis. We're very accountable. We're directly elected and we see that as a great difficulty. There is very little accountability with the OTAB structure as presently constructed.

The OTAB governing body, as you are aware, is proposed to be made up of eight from business, eight from labour, four from the various social agencies and two representatives from education and training, along with ex officio provincial and federal government representatives. We don't question the leadership of business and labour. This body should be client-driven. However, we do challenge the assumption that only two representatives in

the trainer-educator sector can represent all of the five different educator-trainer concerns and institutions.

We propose that the membership be expanded to three seats for educator-trainer, and one of those three seats should be specifically allotted to a representative from the publicly funded school boards. We strongly contend that the public education system, that is, the school boards, must be represented on the OTAB governing body, its four councils and on each of the local training and adjustment boards. We're major players in education and training. The proposed structure just does not recognize that fact.

We further contend that all education and training should be provided by institutions that are accountable. Public funds should not go to provide profit for private trainers. Publicly funded school boards are the only providers of education and training that have the facilities, the experience and the accessibility to clientele that are directly accountable to the taxpayers. For this reason and this reason alone we feel justified in asking for a designated seat on the OTAB governing council and on all LTABs.

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We do have some questions also about openness and the question of accountability. Public business should be conducted in public, but this bill has several inadequacies:

(1) Subsection 8(2) excludes the application of the Corporations Information Act.

(2) Subsection 12(2) permits only two directors' meetings per year to be open to the public.

(3) Section 13 allows directors to pass bylaws governing the procedures of OTAB.

(4) Clause 30(1)(b) under the regulations enables more regulations to be made which govern procedures to be followed at directors' meetings.

Now we have to have openness if we're going to be spending public money and we have to be able to account for these public moneys. We have to be running accessible meetings. Directors' meetings should be open to the public, and this should be reflected in the legislation.

We also have some concern about an appeal process not being present. There are various ways that these programs can be delivered and we have to be assured—that is, the public has to be assured—that the criteria are being followed and the decisions which are being made are in the best interests of all the learners.

Some of these decisions may particularly disadvantage local school boards, and there has to be some sort of appeal process by which these boards can respond. If we don't have, we could have decisions which would be made which would be devastating to the school board.

I can cite you an example in North York. We have the Yorkdale Adult Learning Centre, which employs 118 teachers. It's very difficult to put a figure on it at the moment of how many students would be involved, but it could be 1,500 to 2,000. It services adults only. A decision by the OTAB or an LTAB could virtually close that school and it would have vast repercussions in any school board of a similar nature. I don't claim that we are unique, in the sense that it wouldn't just be putting 118 teachers out of work; it would have ramifications, because of the seniority

system, that would reverberate through our whole system if anything like that did happen.

We'd further like to point out that since the regulations I referred to relating to this bill haven't yet been passed, that's a very strong argument in itself for having an appeal process built in. We don't know what we're talking about right now.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that we do represent the presentation of the School Boards Sector Working Group; that we would like to see the OTAB governing council increase by one member to 23; that that one seat on the OTAB governing council relating to educators and trainers should be given to a representative of publicly funded school boards; that all the proceedings from OTAB and LTABs should be open; that there should be an appeal process; that the school board should continue to retain its exclusive mandate to grant secondary school credits and diplomas and, lastly, that school boards should continue to have the right to provide a variety of adult education and training programs which are accessible and in demand in the community.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Sutherland, please.

Mr Sutherland: Thank you, Mr Floyd, for coming in today. I just wanted to make a few comments in response to the comments about accountability processes in here. There are quite a few unique accountability processes in this legislation that aren't in some of the other pieces of legislation that establish agencies.

First of all, there's the ministerial directive that's put in there and also the obligation for the executive director of the agency to follow that, and of course all the accountants are accountable to the Provincial Auditor. There are provincial plans. There's also a sense that the representatives on the board have some degree of accountability to the public in general but also back to their advisory committees.

I guess how we define accountability is quite interesting and tends to vary from group to group that comes before us, and how we get a good handle on that definition. I notice in your remarks you said that the school board area is the only area where you have direct accountability. The college sector might argue that it has direct accountability, but it may define it in a different way. I guess what I'd like to know is, how do you define the accountability process? Is it a question of what you set up in terms of what you actually put in the legislation, or does it ultimately come down to how it operates in practice?

Mr Floyd: Both. There's no sense in creating a new bureaucracy which operates on rules known only to itself. The public has to be aware of how it does operate. In other words, it has to be seen to be fair and impartial as well as being fair and impartial. My reference to the school board obviously relates to the election locally of trustees who are directly accountable each year. But you're quite right, you can play with the definition of accountability and we'll all grow old.

The Chair: Some of us will have that happen to us sooner than Mr Sutherland.

Mr Sutherland: Some of us are showing the signs sooner than we should be too.

Mr Gary Wilson: Is there time for more?

The Chair: Yes, Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks for your presentation. Sorry I missed a bit of it, but I've looked through it here and I see that on the openness, which I think is an important factor, it's only a suggestion, or only the minimum meetings, two meetings a year open to the public. There's certainly every availability for the board to have them all open if it wants, or to make that decision. It's only a minimum that would be the two. So I want to suggest that I guess school boards function in an open manner and there's no reason why this wouldn't be in a similar way.

Mr Floyd: I suppose my plea is that if that is your feeling and it's the feeling of the committee, why can that not be encoded?

Mr Gary Wilson: The idea is that it's a shared responsibility here, and the purpose of the legislation is to allow the labour market partners as much scope as possible. In keeping with that, it's just to give this minimum number of meetings that would be in public but leave it open to the possibility that more meetings would be open once the board is established.

I'd like actually if you would comment about that, the idea that the board is going from a consumer-driven perspective, that people who use the training and who need it will be the ones who are designing the programs and seeing to their provision, as opposed to another model, which is called the agency-driven one, where the programs are designed and then provided without that much participation by the people who are going to benefit from them.

Mr Floyd: I'm not sure that I understand what you want me to talk about. We have that right now. We have this in the adult programs we offer. They are essentially client-driven, apart from the ones which are English as a second language or English for citizenship purposes which people will seek because there's some definite requirement, there's some legal requirement that they pick this up.

But the way we operate right now is quite a bit client-driven. We have schools operating on shifts. We have schools operating programs with morning classes only or evening classes only to respond to the needs of an individual family situation, for example, and we have people who are working part-time to support themselves. This would be carrying over to OTAB, I would certainly expect.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. Again, that's part of the reason for including the labour market partners in the decision-making, because you use your experience. But at the same time, it's been suggested that the programs aren't meeting the needs of workers and potential workers in our society today. That's why we have to make these changes, to try to improve the provision of training programs.

Mr Floyd: What concerns me, Mr Wilson, is that some people were making statements about the inability of local school boards to respond to the needs of adults based upon their experience when they went through secondary school, and that's a number of years ago. It is not the same situation at all. I would make the case very strongly to you that we have responded to the needs of the community. We

are a different structure, quite an unrecognizable structure, than when, for example, I went to secondary school.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think this is one of the benefits of OTAB. It brings together the main groups in the training field in particular, but even in the larger society, to learn these things. This is one thing we're hearing over and over again, that groups were working in isolation, but now that they're being brought together, they're finding out things that, just as you suggest, we have I guess stereotypes or inherited views of the way a certain sector works. When you sit down with people you find out that that's not the way it works, but we have to overcome those barriers to cooperate better, and I think one of the things that will provide it is better information.

Mr Floyd: Absolutely. Thank you.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you for your presentation. You raise a very important issue, that is the issue of accountability, and you make the point that programs are likely to be transferred out of the hands of various ministries to an independent advisory body, although I'm not sure it'll be purely advisory in that. I think it'll be administering money.

I have difficulty with the premise here and I'm just looking for a bit more in terms of recommendations from you, the premise being that we can take 22 representatives of various interest groups, put them together and assume that through some mysterious process they will end up making recommendations that are in the broader public interest. I'm not sure if I have much faith in that occurring, particularly because there's no accountability to that broader public.

If you had to do this thing all over, would you do it this way? Why couldn't the role of this group simply be that of an advisory body advising the minister?

Mr Floyd: I don't see any reason why it could not have been that way. But I would suspect there has been some advice to the various ministers by the various groups over the years and they feel that their hopes and expectations were not fulfilled.

Mr McGuinty: But now we have a group which you and I will not be able to vote for. It will be spending public money and it will not be accountable directly to us. Does that strike you as a satisfactory solution?

Mr Floyd: Absolutely not. I think we do have a role to play, for the appointed group to oversee the spending of money, but I think it should be delegated in such a way that we can take recognition and make full use of the existing facilities which have been built up in the Ontario education system over the years.

Why should we be talking about transferring things out? We have a system which works and is responsive, and it really concerns us, when we read the legislation, what it might do to the public-supported school system. I'm not saying it's going to do that, but it's certainly quite disturbing, considering the vagueness of the legislation and what might happen.

Mr McGuinty: You make a good point too with respect to the representation. We heard, I guess, from a working group that came in from Ottawa. I think they told us that there were about a million adults enrolled in programs

offered by high schools throughout the province. It strikes me as rather odd that there's no formal representation of school boards on OTAB when they're dealing with that much training, when they're playing that significant a role in training in this province.

Mr Floyd: Indeed, that's the case. The members of the school boards all across Ontario have been rather upset by this. This is the point I was making moments ago, that we don't know where we stand. We'd like some assurances built into the legislation. We have sought some assurances from Mr Silipo and Mr Allen. However, they are no longer players on the scene, so we continue to ask for some reassurances of our future from the new minister, Mr Cooke.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you.

The Chair: I want to thank you, sir, and District 13 of OSSTF for your interest in this matter, for your attendance here today and for sharing those views with us. It's an important part of a committee's process to hear from members of the public, and all the more so when you represent the views of as large a constituency as you do. We thank you kindly, we trust that you'll keep in touch and we welcome you to participate further by contacting individual members or the committee collectively.

We are recessed until 2 pm.

The committee recessed at 1224.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 1400.

ASSOCIATION FRANÇAISE
DES CONSEILS SCOLAIRES DE L'ONTARIO

The Chair: It's 2 o'clock and we're going to resume. The first participant this afternoon is the Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario. Would those people please come forward, have a seat and tell us their names. I want to remind people that simultaneous translation is taking place with the very skilled and competent translation staff. The receivers are available at the back of the room for those people who want to hear in French or English what is being spoken in the other language. People, please tell us your names, your titles, if any, and proceed with your comments. Please try to save at least the last 15 minutes for discussions and exchanges.

M. Fernand Bégin : Je suis Fernand Bégin, président de l'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario. Mes collègues ici sont Normand Blier, qui est vice-président de l'Association pour le secteur public, et Jocelyne Ladouceur, qui est directrice exécutive de l'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario.

L'Association française des conseils scolaires de l'Ontario est heureuse de l'occasion qui lui est offerte de présenter sa réaction face au projet de loi 96 sur le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre. Cette présentation est faite aux membres du comité permanent du développement des ressources.

L'AFCSCO est une association provinciale qui regroupe conseillers et conseillères scolaires et les membres des comités consultatifs de langue française qui oeuvrent au sein des sections et des conseils scolaires de langue française, cela tant au niveau public que catholique. Ils administrent des écoles des paliers élémentaire et secondaire pour environ 70 000 élèves en Ontario.

Le but de l'AFCSCO est de promouvoir et de défendre les intérêts de l'éducation en langue française en Ontario ; promouvoir les intérêts des francophones au sein des conseils scolaires ayant sous leur juridiction des élèves inscrits dans les modules de langue française ; favoriser le développement et le perfectionnement professionnel de ses membres ; favoriser l'adoption de mesures législatives et gouvernementales visant l'éducation française en Ontario ; enfin, promouvoir et défendre, auprès de la collectivité, les intérêts des francophones de l'Ontario en éducation. C'est dans ce contexte-là que nos commentaires vous sont adressés.

Le contexte pour cette présentation : Disons qu'au moment où il a déposé le projet de loi relatif à la création du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre, le ministre du temps, l'honorable Richard Allen, faisait cette déclaration :

«À l'heure actuelle, les personnes qui ont besoin de formation ou qui doivent s'adapter aux changements subis par notre économie sont confrontées à une variété confuse et fragmentée de programmes et de services offerts par différents niveaux de gouvernement, par les collèges com-

munauxitaires, les conseils scolaires, les écoles de formation professionnelle, les organismes communautaires et autres. Grâce au COFAM, les Ontariens et Ontariennes auront plus facilement accès à un régime coordonné mieux en mesure de répondre aux besoins de l'économie, des employeurs et des particuliers.

«Monsieur le Président, la clé du succès du nouveau régime de mise en valeur de la main-d'œuvre qui sera établi par le COFAM est que les pouvoirs et les responsabilités soient partagés entre le gouvernement et les personnes» — et je souligne — «qui sont les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins. Ce sont ces personnes que nous appelons les partenaires du marché du travail.»

Disons que dans son ensemble, par rapport au projet de loi, l'AFCSCO appuie cette déclaration du ministre. En général, nous croyons que le projet de loi respecte les grandes orientations stratégiques que renferme la déclaration du ministre Allen. Cependant, l'AFCSCO constate qu'en ce qui touche la population franco-ontarienne, le projet de loi ne respecte pas la déclaration du ministre voulant «que les pouvoirs et les responsabilités soient partagés entre le gouvernement et les personnes qui sont les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins.»

Certes, la communauté franco-ontarienne est la mieux placée pour connaître ses besoins en matière de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre. Pourtant, le projet de loi 96, dans sa forme actuelle, ne permet pas aux Franco-Ontariens et aux Franco-Ontariennes d'assumer pleinement le rôle qui leur revient, c'est-à-dire : de définir, au sein de la structure du COFAM et des commissions locales, les besoins des francophones ; de contrôler les sommes d'argent étiquetées pour les besoins de formation et d'adaptation de la communauté franco-ontarienne et de les acheminer là où les besoins sont clairement définis et réels ; enfin, de planifier, de gérer et de coordonner l'offre de formation et d'adaptation en fonction des besoins très particuliers de la population franco-ontarienne et en fonction aussi des caractéristiques uniques des communautés franco-ontariennes des diverses régions de la province.

Ainsi, il a été clairement énoncé que les pouvoirs et les responsabilités devront être partagés entre le gouvernement et les personnes qui sont les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins. Le projet de loi 96 ne permet pas que cette réalité soit réalisée. Autrement dit, le projet de loi n'accorde pas à la communauté franco-ontarienne, du moins pour l'instant, au niveau de la deuxième lecture, les pouvoirs et les responsabilités qui devraient lui revenir dans le cadre du COFAM. De façon plus précise, le projet de loi ne permet qu'un seul siège pour les francophones, pour la représentativité francophone au sein de la structure du COFAM, sans juridiction exclusive sur la formation et l'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre franco-ontarienne.

Le ministre Richard Allen avait pourtant promis que deux autres membres de la communauté franco-ontarienne, une représentation francophone du côté patronal et une représentation francophone du côté syndical, seraient appelés à siéger à la table du COFAM. Cette représentation

additionnelle s'effectuera donc vraisemblablement de manière ad hoc, selon la bonne volonté du ministre en place. La population franco-ontarienne ne saurait se satisfaire d'une telle promesse. Rien dans le projet de loi n'indique qu'il y aura au moins trois francophones à la table du COFAM. Un remaniement ministériel ou un nouveau gouvernement au pouvoir aurait vite fait d'effacer cette volonté politique du Nouveau Parti démocratique. L'AFCSO se voit donc obligée de demander une assurance concrète pour ce qui est du projet de loi.

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Si le COFAM doit être un véritable instrument de développement efficace pour la communauté franco-ontarienne, si la communauté franco-ontarienne doit, à son tour, être en mesure d'utiliser ses énergies et son dynamisme au profit des orientations stratégiques du COFAM, il faut aller au-delà des promesses. La communauté franco-ontarienne a été victime de ce genre d'accommodement assez souvent pour en connaître les dangers et pour s'en méfier.

Nos recommandations à la fin du rapport se basent sur deux approches fondamentales. Elles prennent appui principalement à partir de l'Entente Canada-Ontario. Un peu plus loin dans le texte, vous verrez que l'AFCSO s'inspire aussi des recommandations du comité consultatif, le comité panelliste pour la consultation en province qui a eu lieu en hiver 1992, l'an dernier, mais principalement à partir de l'Entente Canada-Ontario sur la mise en valeur de la main-d'oeuvre, signée le 24 octobre 1991.

Cette Entente stipule un cadre d'intervention qui, à notre avis, permet aux deux paliers de gouvernement de mettre en place une structure qui respecte les droits et répond aux besoins des Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes. Entre autres, le troisième principe de l'Entente dans son préambule :

«Il faudra intensifier la participation des groupes actuellement sous-représentés au sein de la main-d'oeuvre, de même que celle des groupes ayant des besoins spéciaux, pour maintenir la croissance économique.»

Or, le projet de loi, il est évident, mentionne ces aspects-là, par rapport à la communauté francophone, de besoins spéciaux qui sont reliés à la communauté francophone. Alors, basée là-dessus, l'Entente Canada-Ontario prévoit que des mesures spéciales devront mettre en lumière ces besoins spéciaux.

L'article 1.0 de l'Entente, entre autres, stipule que :

«Les francophones sont clairement reconnus comme un groupe désigné parce que sous-représentés en matière d'emploi et de formation, mais aussi parce qu'on reconnaît que des obstacles les empêchent de faire partie à part entière de la main-d'oeuvre active.»

L'article 2.0 de l'Entente, section (f) :

«Le Canada et l'Ontario devront collaborer afin de faire en sorte que les membres des groupes sous-représentés au sein de la main-d'oeuvre, les prestataires d'assurance-chômage, les francophones, les travailleurs déplacés et les assistés sociaux aient accès sans restriction aux programmes de formation subventionnés par le gouvernement.»

Je finis avec les deux derniers articles qu'on a voulu vous mentionner, dont l'article 5.4 de l'Entente :

«Le Canada et l'Ontario conviennent que des mesures appropriées seront prises en vue de permettre...» aux francophones, entre autres, «d'avoir plus facilement accès à leurs programmes respectifs de mise en valeur de la main-d'oeuvre et d'y participer avec succès.»

L'article 5.15, et je termine ces citations de l'Entente Canada-Ontario :

«Le Canada et l'Ontario mettront conjointement en place des mesures spéciales pour la formation des francophones.» C'est, à notre avis, un élément essentiel à notre présentation.

Le dialogue communautaire produit par les deux groupes consultatifs en province de l'hiver dernier a mentionné dans plusieurs endroits, entre autres dans leur rapport, que plusieurs témoignages ont porté sur la question de relever ici et là en province les difficultés socio-économiques des francophones à la grandeur de la province. On a aussi souligné les fameux taux élevés d'analphabétisme, d'abandon scolaire, de bénéficiaires de l'aide sociale et d'assimilation du côté des francophones. Nous ne faisons qu'en mentionner quelques-uns.

Certes, par l'absence de structures qui permettront aux francophones de se prendre en main, et leur destinée en main, du côté de la formation et de l'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre, il est certain que ces problèmes-là qui seront soulevés n'iront pas s'amoinrir. Plusieurs ont soulevé aussi, lors des consultations, l'absence de francophones ou de leaders francophones identifiés à l'intérieur des syndicats, entre autres, et à l'intérieur du monde patronal. Les structures ne sont pas vraiment en place pour identifier ces personnes-là.

Je vais vous citer un extrait du rapport que nous considérons primordial :

«Le faible niveau d'éducation des francophones est considéré comme un problème très important attribuable à des structures d'éducation et de formation inadéquates. Les participantes et participants ont souligné les lacunes qui existent dans plusieurs secteurs, dont le nombre insuffisant d'établissements d'enseignement francophones, le choix et la qualité médiocres des programmes et des services de formation en français, et le manque de matériel et de ressources didactiques en français. Par exemple, seulement 70 des 350 programmes d'études des collèges communautaires et 13 de 600 programmes d'apprentissage sont offerts en français en Ontario. En conséquence, les francophones ont soutenu que pour améliorer leur infrastructure de formation, ils doivent exiger la gestion de la formation professionnelle par et pour les francophones.»

Et la conclusion inévitable qu'on retrouve à la page 25 du dit rapport :

«Peu importe la structure organisationnelle choisie pour le COFAM et les commissions locales, le principe de la gestion de la formation professionnelle par et pour les francophones doit être respecté.»

Il est évident que pour l'AFCSO et dans ses requêtes au cours de plusieurs années, on dirait de la dernière décennie certainement, l'AFCSO a comme requête que le gouvernement ou les gouvernements respectifs mettent en place des structures qui puissent répondre aux besoins des francophones en matière de gestion. Ces requêtes sont

faites de façon évidente dans le monde de l'éducation pour ce qui est des écoles primaires et secondaires. L'AFCSO a demandé de même de mettre en place des structures semblables au niveau postsecondaire. Il y a la création déjà d'un collège communautaire. L'AFCSO appuie très fortement la création de deux autres collèges communautaires en province.

Pour ce qui est du COFAM, il est évident que pour l'AFCSO, c'est une structure qui devrait être semblable, qui devrait être mise en place ; c'est-à-dire, une structure qui permet un COFAM francophone parallèle, si vous voulez, mais un COFAM autonome. Certes, le projet de loi ne prévoit pas ce genre de structure-là. Puisque le projet de loi ne prévoit pas ce genre de structure, il est évident que, peu importe la structure qui sera choisie ou finalisée, le principe de la gestion de la formation professionnelle par et pour les francophones devra être respecté dans le projet de loi.

Nous serions prêts à peut-être toucher assez vite les amendements que nous proposons au projet de loi. Vous retrouverez ça à la page 14 du mémoire qu'on vous a présenté.

La disposition 17 du paragraphe 4(1) : Soulignons que l'AFCSO se réjouit de lire le libellé de la disposition 4(1)17 de l'ébauche du projet de loi et elle espère qu'il n'y aura pas de modifications et que ça sera retenu.

L'alinéa 4(2)c, pour ce qui est des critères, touche la répartition des fonds réservés à l'intention des programmes et des services de développement de la main-d'oeuvre. Bien qu'il soit question d'une répartition équitable et appropriée dans toutes les régions de l'Ontario, nulle mention n'est faite d'une répartition équitable et appropriée en fonction des besoins des francophones. L'AFCSO souhaite que cette lacune soit comblée.

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Pour ce qui est des membres du conseil d'administration du COFAM, au niveau des dispositions 2 et 3 du paragraphe 9(2), le paragraphe 9(2) ne comporte pas de représentation francophone suffisante, comme nous l'avons souligné dans le préambule. L'AFCSO a déjà exprimé plus haut ses attentes à cet égard. Elle souhaite que le texte législatif se lise comme suit, du moins en français :

«2. Sept (au moins un francophone) représentants du patronat.»

La même chose du côté des travailleurs :

«3. Sept (au moins un francophone)» parmi les huit, entre autres, «représentants des travailleurs.»

La disposition 4 du paragraphe 9(2) : Les commentaires que l'AFCSO a exprimés au sujet de l'insuffisance de la représentation du secteur de l'éducation doivent être réitérés ici. Comme vous le verrez dans le document un peu plus loin — je pense que c'est une partie que j'ai passée à cause de l'heure — le projet de loi ne prévoit que deux représentants pour tout le monde de l'éducation. L'AFCSO pense que cette représentation-là n'est pas suffisante ; elle est inadéquate. L'AFCSO n'est qu'un parmi une foule d'organismes représentés au sein du secteur d'éducation/formation. Sa voix s'y trouve noyée à travers une mer d'anglophones. Il faut accroître le nombre de

sièges accordés au secteur pour permettre une meilleure représentation du côté francophone.

Le paragraphe 9(4) : Il s'agit d'un vœux que nous pensons un vœux pieux qui n'est pas réalisable. C'est-à-dire que la seule façon d'assurer le reflet de la diversité de la population de l'Ontario, y compris les francophones dans chaque secteur, ainsi que l'équilibre féminin et masculin, c'est de garantir des sièges aux divers groupes qui sont minoritaires. Si vous doutez de l'exactitude de ces propos, vous n'avez qu'à vous pencher sur les deux représentants du secteur éducation/formation. Où est la représentation francophone ?

Le paragraphe 12(2) : L'AFCSO représente des conseils scolaires qui délibèrent presque exclusivement en séance ouverte. Les quelques exceptions à cette règle font l'objet d'une disposition spéciale de la Loi sur l'éducation. Cette disposition permet de traiter de quelques sujets précis à huis clos, notamment les questions du personnel. C'est pourquoi l'AFCSO voit d'un mauvais oeil que seules deux réunions du conseil d'administration par année soient ouvertes au public. C'est quelque chose que nous comprenons difficilement. Nous suggérons donc d'apporter la modification suivante au texte :

«Sauf dans des circonstances exceptionnelles, les réunions des membres du conseil d'administration sont ouvertes au public.»

Enfin, et je vous remercie de votre attention, je vais passer assez vite au dernier amendement et vous ferai grâce de la conclusion que nous vous laisserons lire.

Commentaires émanant du rapport Open Local Government/Des administrations locales accessibles, sur le paragraphe 15(2) : L'AFCSO note que la version française du texte ne traduit pas exactement le sens de la version anglaise. Là où le texte anglais affirme, «The directors shall pass bylaws», le texte français, pour sa part, affirme, «Les membres du conseil d'administration peuvent adopter», alors je pense que la traduction doit être révisée. Nous suggérons de s'en tenir au langage du côté anglais, alors que le côté français est plutôt permissif de ce côté-là.

Entre autres, l'AFCSO est d'avis que le texte devrait être amendé comme suit :

«Les membres du conseil d'administration adoptent des règlements administratifs traitant des conflits d'intérêts, et ayant pour objet de restreindre les activités des membres du conseil d'administration.»

Nous suggérons cet amendement un petit peu plus loin à l'intérieur même du paragraphe.

Finalement, nous voulons toucher à la question de la gestion des programmes français et la direction de ces programmes-là. Afin d'accorder aux francophones la gestion des programmes qui les touchent, l'AFCSO propose les amendements suivants. Je vous reporte aux paragraphes 16(9) et (10).

«(9) Le COFAM établira une direction des services en français, composée des membres francophones siégeant au corps dirigeant et des membres francophones siégeant aux conseils, de l'administrateur en chef», CEO, «ainsi que du chef de la direction francophone nommé par l'administrateur en chef en consultation avec les membres de la direction des services en français.»

«(10) La direction des services en français sera chargée des orientations générales, de la mise en application, de l'évaluation et de la gestion des budgets rattachés aux programmes français de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.»

L'article 25, et je termine : L'AFCSO souhaite voir l'ajout de ce paragraphe-là à l'article 25 pour garantir aux francophones qui siègent au COFAM la gestion des programmes qui les touchent. Cet ajout s'exprime de la façon suivante :

«Les prévisions budgétaires doivent identifier les sommes allouées aux besoins de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre francophone.»

Merci. Je réalise que j'ai pris plus de temps ; c'est un peu l'histoire de ma vie.

The Chair: Thank you kindly. Mr Wilson, very briefly: 90 seconds.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks very much for your presentation, Mr Bégin. It was very informative and I appreciate the amendments that you're suggesting. Also, I appreciate your sympathy, I guess, for what we're trying to achieve with OTAB. Of course, I want to remind you that the directors will be appointed with consultation with the groups that will be represented, but primarily they are to serve with the public interest in mind and they will be appointments by the government and have to fit the criteria that are being applied to other appointments as well. In other words, they have to reflect the makeup of the province.

I guess you know, too, that the federal board, the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, has Gérard Docquier as one of its members, so that even with his labour background he's still, I would say, a representative of the francophone community and can bring that to the fore. So there are ways of addressing the francophone needs through the normal appointment mechanism, if you would like to comment briefly on that.

M. Bégin : Le commentaire, que je pense est assez court, est le suivant. Il est fort probable qu'en pratique, et le ministre Allen nous avait assurés de ça, la représentativité, pour ce qui est du nombre de trois, on l'exprime dans le rapport comme étant une représentation qui sera là mais de façon ad hoc. Ce que nous voulons, c'est que le projet de loi lui-même, à l'intérieur de son libellé, assure qu'une représentation de trois fera partie du projet de loi.

Alors, on ne veut pas dépendre de la bonne disposition des personnes, peut-être, face à la question francophone où des clauses qui seraient au niveau du protocole ne seraient pas incarnées ou incarnées dans le projet de loi lui-même. C'est cette assurance-là que nous voulons du côté de la représentation.

M. McGuinty : Merci beaucoup pour votre présentation. Comment est-ce que vous allez choisir un représentant pour siéger sur le conseil ? Parce qu'on a entendu ce matin un autre groupe, et cet après-midi on va entendre un autre groupe qui représente un secteur de la francophonie de l'Ontario. Je me demande comment, à la fin de la journée, vous allez vous asseoir à la même table et choisir un seul représentant.

M. Bégin : Je ne sais pas si je comprends bien la question, mais le siège francophone parmi les 22 est déjà rempli en la personne de M^{me} Labelle. Elle a été choisie par le Comité directeur francophone par des entrevues. M^{me} Labelle est présente, d'ailleurs. Elle est notre représentante pour remplir le siège francophone.

Ce que nous demandons du côté patronal et syndical, c'est que les mêmes dispositions soient à l'intérieur du projet de loi pour permettre aux syndicats de choisir un représentant francophone parmi les huit, et la même chose du côté patronal, puisqu'il est prévu, dans le projet de loi ou du moins dans les comités directeurs jusqu'à maintenant — steering committees — que les groupes qui sont représentés sont les groupes qui choisissent les personnes. Les nominations, je pense, sont entérinées par le ministre en place.

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The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Tilson, please.

Mr Turnbull: Turnbull. First of all, my colleague Dianne Cunningham apologizes that she—

The Chair: My apologies to you, sir.

Mr Turnbull: Yes, quite so, quite so. She apologizes that she had to slip out. She had an urgent call that she needed to take.

My question would be along the question we've heard from a lot of groups about the representation of the education community. So far we're seeing only two seats which have got to be—I don't know if they'll have an arm-wrestling contest as to who's going to represent it. My question to you briefly would be, do you believe we should have an expanded group of educators so that we have a tripartite approach of labour, business and educators? That would essentially allow for a francophone educator, because at the moment there are only two educators.

M. Bégin : C'est un peu ce que nous soulignons dans le rapport. Nous pensons que le secteur d'éducation, entre autres, tout ce qui s'appelle «enseignement» primaire, secondaire et postsecondaire — quand on parle d'éducation et quand on parle de formation, plusieurs questions ont été posées dans ce sens-là jusqu'à maintenant, même au niveau des comités de direction ou «steering committees». Où est la ligne entre l'éducation et la formation ? Ce n'est pas très clair, et quand on parle de formation, on parle d'enseignement, on parle d'éducation, de «training», et dans ce sens-là, tout le monde de l'éducation est un peu laissé-pour-compte vis-à-vis de la représentativité, parce que c'est certainement le secteur majeur par rapport au champ d'activité.

Quand on parle de syndicats, on parle de personnes, entre autres. Quand on parle d'employés, on parle de personnes, des ouvriers, on parle de travailleurs et travailleuses, on parle d'employeurs. Mais le champ visé, c'est la formation, l'éducation, et je pense qu'il y a un manque sérieux du côté de la représentativité. Les deux sont déjà nommés, à ce que je sache, du côté de l'éducation. Ce sont deux représentants : l'un qui vient des collèges et l'autre qui vient des conseils scolaires. Ce sont deux personnes anglophones, je crois. Il nous manque très certainement la représentativité au complet de tout le secteur parce que,

entre autres, si l'on y va par l'origine de ces individus-là, il n'y a pas de représentant des universités qui siège vraiment à la table, parce qu'il y a deux personnes. Alors, je pense que ça devrait être augmenté comme nombre, quitte à augmenter le nombre de 22. On sait que des gros comités, c'est peut-être plus difficile pour le fonctionnement, et je pense qu'on se doit d'assurer une certaine équité de représentation.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. The committee wants to thank you, Mr Bégin, Mr Blier and Ms Ladouceur, for coming here this afternoon, speaking on behalf of the association. You've obviously generated some interest in the points you've made and we are grateful to you for your time today and for the enthusiasm with which you present those views. We thank you kindly and trust you'll keep in touch. Take care. Have a safe trip home.

ACCESS ACTION COUNCIL

The Chair: The next participant is Access Action Council. If those people would please come forward, have a seat, tell us their names, their titles, if any, and proceed with their submissions, trying to save at least the last 15 minutes of the half-hour for questions and exchanges. Go ahead.

Mr Khan Rahi: Thank you very much for this opportunity. We appreciate the chance to speak on Bill 96, known as OTAB.

We are an advocacy organization that works on issues of racial equality and also access to human services by racial minorities in Metro. We are affiliated with all social planning councils in Metro Toronto and also we have involvement from community organizations and individuals who wish to address the issues of access to human services by racial minorities.

I preface the comments and concerns that I have with regard to Bill 96 by saying that racial minorities, as most members here are aware, are systematically discriminated against within the labour market and systematically suffer from regular unemployment, and that the experiences, skills and kinds of resources most immigrants and refugees bring to Canada are basically not utilized. In many ways this is quite wasteful.

Against this background, we feel that Bill 96, or OTAB, is an active form of support to improve the employability of immigrants and minorities and to realize the potential that the training packages that are proposed by OTAB will offer.

Having said that, we are concerned about the fact that the kinds of training that will be provided by OTAB are really critical. We want to stress the fact that, for example, OTAB should take very seriously into account the provision of sectoral training for racial minorities. Specifically speaking, we're concerned that at least in Metro Toronto high-tech training should be made available for racial minorities. Of course, in addition to that, there are various apprenticeship programs that are already in existence, and I'm not sure to what extent they are designed in terms of sectoral training. But we stress the fact that OTAB should look into sectoral training in order to direct apprenticeship

programs and also design and develop training programs and packages that will focus on high-tech areas.

The second concern in that area of the type of training that OTAB promises to do is that we would like to see a short-term package of training that could include programs for individuals in industries and occupations that are in demand—in other words, occupations that are in short supply of employees with skills that are needed. Most immigrants and refugees whom we know will benefit from those kinds of programs.

Third, and I'm sure other groups probably have come in front of this committee and addressed this, is the question of professions and trades. In other words, most immigrants and refugees who have training, trade certifications or professional degrees from outside Canada cannot enter into the professions and trades because of systemic barriers. We feel that OTAB is in the best position to design and develop programs, special packages of training, that could start upgrading or provide short-term training that could take the form of bridging programs or transition programs that could enable racial minorities to enter into the various professions and trades. I think this will be an extremely important step for OTAB to take because, as I referred to earlier, the wasteful aspect of the skills and experiences that immigrants and refugees are bringing to Canada will be dealt with in a very systematic way.

I recognize that the ministry within the Ontario government has introduced some initiatives in this area, and we find that inadequate and ineffective in light of the enormous complexity that is involved in terms of minorities, especially immigrants and refugees, and the kinds of skills and training they are bringing into Canada from outside.

Outside of concerns about training and the types of training that OTAB promises to offer, we have some other concerns about the structural arrangement. We've been quite involved during the last year in a lot of round table discussions specifically around the question of structure. A lot of energy and resources of OTAB, staff and so on of this government has gone into the structural arrangements that OTAB should have. But still for racial minorities, as I indicated earlier and I'm sure other groups have indicated, the minority representation on OTAB is really ineffective and inadequate. The fact that we have only provision for one representative on the government board in itself shows how inadequate the situation is, because one person could not adequately represent all of our interests.

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We have repeatedly said and stressed the fact that all labour market partners, specifically labour and business who have the majority of the seats on the governing board, and also other equity groups, should have provision for minority representations in their group. This way we could increase our chances of having access to the structural arrangement that OTAB is proposing.

Earlier, actually late December 1992, the former deputy minister who was in charge of OTAB sent a brief around indicating that OTAB would be setting up reference groups, and specifically saying that these reference groups would be designed and formed to the existing steering

committees and also the OTAB project and the governing board would have involvement.

We're not quite sure what this involvement means, whether the government will provide leadership in this area or basically as an equal partner. But in any case we feel that if these communication units, as we refer to them, known as steering committees and advisory groups, will basically try to transfer and become or form steering committees, I think they will not do justice to our representation in the complex structure of OTAB.

What I'm specifically saying is that I think it will be important to introduce the kinds of structural arrangements that will make these reference groups more effective, more efficient and not turn them into administrative units. The problem with that is that if they become administrative units and function as such, our representation, which in this case in the present arrangement is only one person, will in effect turn into a staff serving these reference groups. We are concerned about that. We think it should be a much more open structure and it should have a much more inclusive involvement because of the fact that, as everybody's aware, racial minorities are different groups, different linguistic, cultural, racial and even regional dimensions that exist within our community.

The second concern we have in terms of the structure is that there should be information outreach centres or facilities available for OTAB so that all racial minorities could have unrestricted access to OTAB training opportunities and possibilities that might be there. We feel that the present structure of employment centres is an inadequate way of finding out about almost anything, and specifically for OTAB I think will be quite an inadequate way of finding out what's going on.

The last concern that we'd like to raise is that we'd like to see OTAB establish a much more aggressive and efficient data collection system. The reason for that is that right now, actually, within the present situation, there is a sporadic and very unsystematic body of literature on the question of patterns of employment, characteristics of employment and unemployment among racial minorities. We feel that if a more efficient and systematic data collection system would be placed, it would do two things:

(1) It will establish a good monitoring system to identify, to learn about patterns of employment among racial minorities.

(2) It will identify a systematic pattern of relationships between the characteristics of participants and the outcome of their involvement in these training programs.

In other words, we would want to know, at least for research purposes, what racial minorities gain from various training programs they would be engaged in.

Those are my comments and I'm open for questions.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to thank you very much for your presentation. I find it very interesting that you are very concerned about the representation that visible minorities would have. I think a lot of this could be addressed if we allowed communities to form their own local boards, these LTABs as they're going to call them, local training and adjustment boards. Then you'd have a reflection of local communities.

With all these restrictions placed through this legislation, you're going to have sort of a Queen's Park prototype, and it's going to be basically duplicated all over the province. I think some of the various rules are going to start to restrict who gets on there.

What I'm very concerned about, for instance, is the union representation. For whatever reasons, just historically, much of the union representation, the same as on the business side, doesn't represent the community as we know it today across the province. If we had communities being allowed to form their own community of interests to come together on these training boards, I think we would get true representation of those communities.

What I'm very concerned about is that we're spelling out so strictly who can and who can't be on OTAB, and therefore we're also going to be restricting people who should be on the local boards, especially people who represent visible minorities. So I share your concern. I certainly am going to be moving amendments so we can make sure that the local boards reflect the local communities and allow those local communities to put forward their own people and develop a board that represents that community and speaks for it. So I thank you for that, and if you'd like to comment any further, that would be fine.

Mr Rahi: That's all right. I appreciate the fact that you raised that, because for us, accessing information alone is a really key thing, especially if you think of the situation of refugees, for instance, most of whom do not even have a very systematic or organized social network, especially if they don't even have family connections; some of them do, some of them don't, of course. I think for that purpose alone, if nothing else, it's important to have information available, easily accessible and unrestricted so that people could feel encouraged to come forward and get involved.

The kinds of public information sessions and public education events we have organized have shown systematically during the last year—in fact, we held one quite recently—that there are still a large number of people who come forward to these events we organize who have never heard of OTAB. They have never heard of these possibilities and programs. So we're questioning what's happening in terms of accessibility and information itself.

On top of that, I think the government's OTAB project is in a great position to provide, wherever possible, a sense of leadership that will be encouraging these various groups and individuals to come forward and apply themselves or seek possibilities and so on, because I think the situation is quite drastic and there is a lack of information. I appreciate your comments, sir.

Mr Ramsay: The point of access is going to be very important.

What disturbs me about the legislation is that it all talks about how it's going to work on the top. It's talking about the Ontario-wide board. It doesn't talk at all about how the local organizations will work or how access will be provided for clients. I would like to see something that is really driven by the people who need the training, something that would be as comfortable as storefront operations

in communities, so that people feel very comfortable that this is the LTAB office, so that they know where it is, so that it's part of the community and they can basically go in there and find out information, not only on what sort of skills are needed but where one can pick up the training to garner those skills. I think that's going to be important.

You're right that we get it down to the local level. Right now, unfortunately, it's sort of a top-down operation, but where it's going to be important to people is in the communities. We've got to very quickly get it from this top-down structure which this legislation talks about and get it to a community-based operation where people know about it in the community and feel there's easy access. You just walk in and start to talk to a counsellor about your needs.

Mr Rahi: Yes. That's why I was suggesting that outreach information offices should be set up outside employment centres or alongside those so that people can clearly identify OTAB, the training possibilities. We're specifically concerned about the fact that a large number of minorities have training, have professions, have trades. Most of you have heard stories of people highly skilled in professions who are driving cabs or delivering pizza and all those things. It's quite disheartening, because this is a tremendously wasteful situation. It's very bad for the individuals involved. Of course, the government could not start a massive training program like OTAB and ignore people who already have training and have come forward so far and are ready to take advantage of the situation.

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Mr Turnbull: Mr Rahi, I think what Mr Ramsay was speaking about is very important and I just want to make sure we clarify this. I don't want to put words in his mouth, but I think he was suggesting that rather than your necessarily getting an extra seat at the OTAB level, it is to make sure there is sufficient representation to reflect the community at the local level by having the LTAB representation. Is it your feeling that would adequately cover the situation?

Mr Rahi: I am aware of that and I think I understand where Mr Ramsay comes from, but what I'm saying is that basically if—unless you're suggesting a drastic change in the structure of OTAB. OTAB is basically a structural proposal altogether. In terms of what it offers, the training possibilities, it is through a structure. So we're saying that if it remains as such, as a structure, unless we have structure provisions for us to be represented adequately across the system, I don't think we'll be getting that, but on this suggestion to organize it at a very local level and have a representation level of training, yes. In fact, that will happen by default, because people will have to organize at that level.

Mr Turnbull: It seems to me that the local level is the important level where you ensure—you tend to get communities which grow up as people immigrate here, either as refugees or as normal immigrants. They will tend to centre in certain areas. Certainly, at the beginning when they first come here, that's been the history. To ensure that we can identify the needs of that community in terms of

upgrading their skills to fit the Canadian experience so they can in fact practise their trades—that, I think, was the thrust of what Mr Ramsay was saying, because there has been a lot of concern expressed during these committee hearings by various groups that they feel the representation on the OTAB board is not adequate.

We had a group this morning which represented visible minorities of francophone extraction and they were suggesting they should have a seat at the OTAB board. Ultimately, when you start getting to those nuances, you could imagine a board of 50 or 60 people so that everybody felt every nuance was represented. I don't get out of what you're saying that that's what you're asking for. You want to make sure that at the ground level, where it affects and helps the people you represent, you have representation.

Mr Rahi: I was asking, if you like, guarantees from the OTAB structure to say that kind of local level of involvement should happen. We're very much interested in the outcome of our people getting involved in various training so that the chance of employability will be higher, because the press has often rhetorically said that OTAB is promising training, and training for what?

Beyond that, the more profound meaning is that if OTAB means fundamental changes in the employment structure here in Ontario, there should be an inclusive structure. In other words, we have to have access to that, otherwise what we're doing is setting up different levels of barriers without consciously knowing.

That's why I commented about the reference groups, because the reference groups are filled by service providers and people whose own primary interest will be to get access to training dollars while people at the local community level you're talking about will not even get access or hear about those things. I think that would be an unfortunate construction of barriers right there. We're saying, let's open the system altogether if it means you're bringing about some massive structure changes in Ontario.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you for your presentation, Mr Rahi. You've raised a number of important issues and I think it shows your experience with the racial minorities steering committee, which I understand you have spent some time with.

I want to continue this discussion of the representation on the board and in the local community, starting with Mr Ramsay's suggestion and his saying something to the effect that local communities should put forward the representatives on the local boards.

I think the operative term here is "put forward," because it raises the question, just how will that occur? It hasn't occurred very well to this point. As you suggested yourself, you have had people coming forward for whom OTAB is a new concept. They've never heard of it before. I would suggest this is partly because of the lack of organization that extends even into the communities. Communities aren't made up of well-organized groups. They show a diverse nature, just as the province does, so there has to be some organizing feature there.

I would suggest further that's what OTAB does, starting at the provincial level, where it is bringing together

directors who represent both groups that nominate them as well as the public interest, and then the organizing will extend into the community as well, but the community boards will reflect the community. So it is this question then of making sure that the boards represent the community.

I want to mention to you, as you probably know from the legislation, subsection 9(4) about the selection of directors reflecting the importance of "Ontario's linguistic duality and the diversity of its population and ensuring overall gender balance shall be recognized." So the appointment structure will recognize and reflect that need for any government agency to reflect the diversity of Ontario's population.

Mr Rahi: Yes, I'm aware of that section. In fact, we insisted on much more explicit language. Diversity may mean something to us, but I don't think in many instances it specifically or explicitly says that racial—at least it should clearly say access and equity in terms of the OTAB structure. We repeatedly said that diversity or pluralism, all those concepts that are in the language of OTAB, should become much more explicit, saying that OTAB wants to be more reflective of racial minorities and the demographic factor this province is facing, specifically Metro.

As you are well aware, there are all kinds of projections, all kinds of demographic data around that tell you that almost every initiative must be reflective of the diversity of the ethnoracial communities in this province.

Of course the notion of diversity is there and linguistic duality is there. Of course you heard the Franco-Ontarians debating that as well, so obviously the language is inadequate. I think we would like to see a much more explicit language there saying: "Spell out diversity. What does it mean?"

Mr Gary Wilson: Of course, the proof is in the taste of the pudding, isn't it? We'll have to see how it works out. Would you say that this is a good beginning, at least, by including the labour market partners in the decision-making? For instance, the reference groups: I'm not quite sure whether we're talking about the same thing here when we talk about reference groups. Our understanding is that these reference groups will be there to advise the directors, to give them a much deeper understanding of the issues that are in the community.

Mr Rahi: Sure, but our basic question is, who's going to be in the reference group? We want to make sure that, for instance, from our point of view, service providers are not sitting there, because if service providers are there and—umbrella organizations, advocacy organizations, information organizations, these people who do not have a vested immediate interest in that I think is far better, as opposed to having service providers. As I said, their own primary interest will be to access those training dollars.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think this is the importance of seeing the structure of the board, that this will be reflected throughout the system; again, the very strong emphasis on the consumers of the service.

Mr Rahi: Yes, okay, but then we go back to the structure arrangement that basically has come along in terms of the peer approach. What I'm really basically saying is that

this structure needs a language that will localize the accessibility to those training possibilities.

I think what it is, is that basically right now we have a structure but we really don't have a language that will complement that structure. So what's happening is that most of us come forward, we ask, and you say, "Well, get more involved in this structure." Actually, most people do not want to be more involved with the structure. As I say, let's make the structure more accessible, because if training means employability—it means that people would be able to bring themselves out of underemployment and chronic unemployment and so on—we need to see this massive system that is proposed more accessible. That's all we're saying.

The reference group, you're right: Basically, it's there, but we want to know who's going to be there.

Mr Gary Wilson: Also, you mentioned—

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Wilson. We appreciate your comments. To you, Mr Rahi, the committee expresses its gratitude for your interest and your appearing today and speaking on behalf of your council. You've made a valuable contribution to the process. We are indeed grateful to you. We trust that you'll keep in touch.

Mr Rahi: Great. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Take care, sir.

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COUNCIL OF ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

The Chair: The next participant is the Council of Ontario Universities. We've got their written submission, which will form part of the record by virtue of being filed as an exhibit. If the people speaking on behalf of that council will please come forward, have a seat, tell us their names, their titles or positions if any and then tell us what they will, please try to save the last 15 minutes of the half-hour for questions and exchanges.

Dr Lorna Marsden: My name is Lorna Marsden, and I'm here with my colleagues representing the Council of Ontario Universities; that's 16 universities and three affiliated post-secondary institutions across Ontario. Perhaps I should ask my colleagues to introduce themselves before we begin.

Dr Al Oatridge: I'm Al Oatridge from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute. I'm chair of the COU task force on training and adjustment.

Dr Norm Shulman: Norm Shulman from the Council of Ontario Universities.

Dr Marsden: We're very glad to have this opportunity to speak to this committee this afternoon on Bill 96. We are here because we believe that skills training is very important and there are many important aspects of this bill. We as people involved in skills training in the province of Ontario need a strong and continuing presence in OTAB if it is going to be as successful as we think it can be. The universities that are represented here today are chiefly involved in upgrading and cross-skilling of people who enter the university system and people who are now in the work-

force but seeking that kind of skills training and advanced skills training.

We recognize the changing nature of the labour force and the demand for skills in what is now referred to as a global economy. We have long experience in skills training and we have over 400,000 people involved in our institutions now on an annual basis.

All of these points are elaborated on in our brief. Our brief provides details, examples and arguments to show the extent and the relevance of the universities to training of students and workers in Ontario. Our brief demonstrates that universities have always been deeply involved in training and that we continue to be now.

I understand from what the Chair just said that our brief will become part of the record of this committee, and therefore we don't propose to read the brief. We hope you will. But I wonder if we could go to some specific points.

If you look at table 1, which is appended to the back of the brief, you'll find it indicates that while there are over 96,000 part-time undergraduate students, and probably the vast majority of them people who are working and going to university at the same time, there are slightly more continuing education students in the province of Ontario. This is also true for graduate students, people doing advanced training, people who are keeping their qualifications up to date, part-time graduate students numbering about 11,000. Altogether you see 424,560 students in this province, a great many of them in updating skills and continuing education.

What forms does that take? About 196,000 of them are in continuing education, but we also offer co-op education. If you look at table 2, which is over the page, you can see that there are 13,000 people in this province who are in co-op education, which means that they are in skills training of some kind.

The universities also offer customized programs. By customized programs, we're talking about programs that employers of one kind or another have asked universities to develop. If you look at table 3, the subsequent page, you'll see some of the examples of customized and non-traditional programs in which universities are involved with business and industry, with labour, with the community, professional associations and government, via distance education and cooperation among institutions and community colleges as well as universities.

Distance education occupies a great many people in the university system. Universities also have outreach programs to underrepresented groups throughout the province and, through the research that goes on in universities, provide experience for working people as well as knowledge of how all of this works.

We conclude that we have a great deal of experience in skills training, that we have a great deal to offer and that we are an important part of the skills training system in this province.

The special programs I've just listed, offered by universities, are not covered by the operating grants that are transferred from provincial governments to the universities. In many cases, companies or unions or whoever we're working with are paying for this education for their workers.

Of course, some large companies are in a position to do that, but many of the small and medium-sized employers in this province who are creating so many of the jobs at the present time are not in a position to do that. We argue, therefore, that there is a real need for the OTAB legislation to consider those kinds of circumstances.

If I may, I'd like to refer you to page 14 of our brief, on which we list our specific concerns. I'd like to go over our specific concerns with the legislation and then open ourselves up to questioning on any of these matters.

One of our major concerns is one you've heard before. Only two of the 22 seats on OTAB are in the education and training sector. There really are, as you know, at least five components to the education and training sector. So we are very concerned that universities and others in our sector have been relegated to a rather minimal role in OTAB.

Mr Gary Wilson: Excuse me, Ms Marsden. I think you mean page 8.

Dr Marsden: I beg your pardon. I did mean page 8. My apologies. I'm working with a double-spaced version. I won't refer to page numbers. Thank you.

We are concerned with the fact that only two of the 22 seats on the board then are in the education and training sector. We would like to see OTAB succeed and therefore we would like to see some modifications now to the composition of OTAB.

Our first proposed amendment then would be to paragraphs 4(1)15 and 16 of the bill, in which we'd like to see a more important use for public educational institutions. The wording of those sections of the bill says "make effective use of" public education institutions. We'd rather see some wording that conveyed more of a sense of partnership. We would urge you to modify the wording in paragraph 4(1)15 to read "to work in partnership with Ontario's educational and training resources such as universities, colleges, schools and trainers." That would be specific. It would ensure that skills at all levels, from the technical to the highly technological skills, can be accommodated.

In paragraph 4(1)16, on the same point, we would like the wording to seek to strengthen Ontario's publicly funded education system. Universities have a great deal of established experience and expertise and we don't want to be neglected in this venture. The bill at the present time doesn't even refer specifically to universities.

In subsection 9(2), we hope a larger number of seats would be devoted to educators and trainers—I've already made this point—because we already provide training for over 400,000 people in the province. We would like to be more directly involved. At the same time, we would at least like to urge that changes be made to section 18 to ensure adequate representation from all components of the educational training sector on the local boards. We'd like to see you stipulate five seats in both sections—five seats on OTAB and on the local boards as well—for the education and training sector.

Our next proposed amendment is in the same subsection 9(2) and in subsection 9(5), where we'd like to see the word "may" changed to "shall," and in several other sections

of the bill, to ensure that the important element of the initiative is put into place.

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We'd also like to urge some clarity in specifying that the location of the administrative offices of the local boards will be neutral in order not to prejudice the involvement of the existing deliverers of training.

In subsection 9(8), we believe it should state that the relevant reference group should be fully consulted in the filling of vacancies.

In section 16, we'd like to see the section more specific about the relationship of the chief executive officer to the board.

We would urge the committee to modify section 19 to ensure adequate representation from universities on the councils. Here again we believe that the word "may" should be changed to "shall."

A very important modification is the specification in section 20 that reference groups "shall" be established. We're aware, as all of you are, that some partnerships and important attempts at partnership have run aground in large measure due to inadequate arrangements for reference groups. We cite the Workplace Health and Safety Agency as a recent striking case, where almost all of the employer representatives on the board resigned. We would like to ensure that this doesn't happen in the training initiative.

We'd also like to see in section 30, dealing with regulations, wording including to require that the regulations be developed in consultation with the reference groups.

Those are our principal changes.

We think that OTAB can be a major and significant contribution to labour force adjustment and continuous learning and we hope it will be. But we do believe that to do this it should recognize the experience and the contributions currently being made by institutions like the universities. It would be costly and inefficient to ignore our long-established infrastructure and experience, and in particular, the important role that universities play in producing advanced skills and in preparing the teachers who will be needed to train highly qualified learners.

I'd like to conclude at that point and ask for any questions to my colleagues.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you. Good to see you again. I'm very appreciative of your coming today and taking the time. I think many of us felt that the education community hadn't made itself heard as loudly as we had expected it would. They certainly are now doing that in these hearings.

I would like you to expand on a couple of areas. First of all, I think there's a feeling out there that the universities right now aren't particularly involved in training, so I'd like you to tell us to what extent. The other one I was interested in, as you were going through the brief, is that you underlined the word "research."

I'm wondering what role the universities play now in defining the training needs so that we don't have a huge duplication of that at the OTAB board level, because part of that huge bureaucracy is going to be defining training

needs. I'm wondering where you can be helpful and in fact we need such a big bureaucracy.

Then I'd also like you to respond to one of the concerns that we're getting from the education community. You've done it well. Are you saying that we should be amending the OTAB and the local boards to, say, five education representatives, and with regard to local boards, would your suggestion be that we put that in at least the broad makeup of the board or the specific, whichever you prefer to comment on, in the legislation or in the regulations?

Dr Marsden: On your last point, which perhaps we could take first because it's probably the most straightforward, yes, we are recommending that there be five representatives from the education and training sector, broadly defined. I'm sure you know what we mean by "five," so I won't repeat that.

With respect to regulations or legislation, let me ask Norm Shulman.

Dr Shulman: No, we think there should be at least some fairly specific reference in the legislation to this possibility. We want to support OTAB, but one of the big difficulties we have is that so much of the essence of OTAB has been left to the regulations, and it gives one rather minimal comfort to have to wait for yet another round of discussions. At this point we don't even have assurance that the reference groups and the key parties are going to be involved in the creation of those regulations, so our preference would be, from a comfort perspective, to have it right in the legislation.

Dr Marsden: Thank you. Let me ask Professor Oatridge too.

Dr Oatridge: As to the question of the extent of training that's already taken place in the university system, maybe I could give an example of my own institution, which is Ryerson. I am the director for the Centre for Advanced Technology Education. That centre is approximately eight years old and has been set up specifically to provide outreach training for business, industry, government, the professions and labour. The other half of the equation is research.

As chair of this particular task force I have found there is a structure similar to that in almost every university in the province. It may not be called a centre; some of them are "centres of excellence." One of the mandates for a centre of excellence is to pass on information at the advanced level to business and other groups. I'm not sure if that fully answers your question or not, but it will give you an indication of the amount that's going on.

Dr Marsden: Thank you. We've sprinkled our brief with specific examples from universities all around the province, so we hope members of the committee will see that everywhere in this province there are universities deeply involved with training in the local community.

May I, Mr Chair, introduce Professor Noah Meltz, the principal of Woodsworth College at the University of Toronto, who has just joined us. I don't know whether you heard the second question, but you would be the appropriate person to answer it, Noah: How much research goes on in universities to predict labour force needs and skills

needs, the kind of things OTAB may be undertaking on its own, unless it's already done elsewhere? Are you able to comment on that?

Dr Noah Meltz: I can comment briefly on that. There are really two sides to that question. One is the expertise that people in universities in their own research have in terms of predicting more generally for the system. The second part is in different areas that look to the needs for their particular areas of other professions, and it's really more decentralized.

Each area will look to not only the potential student intake but also, to varying degrees, the extent to which there'll be jobs when the students get out. I think, especially in the cycle we're in now, that universities are looking to that aspect as well. They are conscious of the fact that they have a responsibility to the students when they emerge from the system as well as when they enter the system.

Dr Marsden: If I may add a little word: Professor Meltz is well known for his predictions of the demand and supply for tool and die workers, for example, which he's been doing for 20 years.

Dr Meltz: For 12 years.

Dr Marsden: Yes. For a long time. So on the research side universities not only have a lot of people who are experts in particular occupations' and professions' demand and supply but, in addition to that, offer training at the advanced level of skills training—engineers of all kinds, technicians of all kinds; all kinds of health-related occupations for which training is offered at universities and sometimes exclusively at universities.

Mr Sutherland: I'm glad to see the universities are represented here today. I think some people watching may be surprised that the universities are here, but I'm glad you've come to present your case and demonstrate how much training universities are already doing. We thank you for your brief and your comments about the OTAB structure.

I just wanted to ask a more general question. We've had the college sector in; we certainly had the high school sector in, both public and separate, and I think, from my perspective, that you're all doing some really good things. Some people outside the systems may come and say, "Well, if I look at it I see colleges offering ESL, I see high schools offering ESL." You've mentioned that you offer computer programs, colleges offer computer programs, high schools offer computer programs. I guess from an outside perspective, in terms of when they look and say, are you all offering the same thing and meeting the needs, is the continuum there, and more importantly, if I am an individual who wants to really develop that, do we have that sense of coordination between those three different bodies of publicly funded institutions to allow a person to easily go through that type of continuum?

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Dr Marsden: Let me just say briefly—my colleagues may wish to add—that one of the great advantages of this legislation is that it will really facilitate the kind of coordination and cooperation that hasn't always existed. We

don't all offer the same kinds of courses, but as you know, as peoples' skills develop they need more and more advanced training and skills in a whole variety of areas, and increasingly, people in all parts of the labour force are returning to school somewhere for more advanced training.

I wouldn't defend the existing level of cooperation, although it's very high in some cases and in some courses, but I would say that one of the advantages we anticipate from this legislation is the ability to build greater cooperation, and it is coming. We can offer you examples in every part of this province.

Noah, do you want to add a word?

Dr Meltz: Just one word on the ESL within Woodsworth College at the University of Toronto. We offer teaching English as a second language, so the integration comes in terms of different levels of that skill that's imparted, and we have a large program just to train people who will be teaching English as a second language.

Mr Martin: Just to build on that question a little bit, I know that in some areas there are actually articulation agreements now being developed between colleges and universities, for example. What's your feeling about that kind of movement?

Dr Marsden: We certainly welcome it and we're encouraging it, and there are more and more being developed.

Mr Martin: That hasn't always been the case, however.

Dr Marsden: That's true.

Mr Martin: There's been this sort of elitist attitude at the university level that didn't recognize the college as being quite up to snuff or whatever, but that's changing, in your opinion and mine.

Dr Marsden: There are lots of specific examples of where it's changing, and I think that will increase. The labour force has changed and demands have changed. I think universities recognize that everywhere, and it is changing very rapidly indeed.

The Chair: Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Did you want to—

Dr Shulman: I was just going to add to that. If you want to look really at the front end of that, there is an enormous number of things that are going on where universities are encouraging students at the high school and public school level, everything from the simple science fair that your kids come home and talk about to competitions for spelling, writing, literature, all sorts of things which encourage students at a very early age to become familiar with the university and to develop their skills so they can go on and utilize them in later life. So even at that stage, where I think your question maybe wasn't directly pointed, there's a great deal going on, and then, as you've just heard, at the level of community colleges and universities a great deal more, and I think you'll see over the next couple of years even more happening by way of articulation.

Mr Martin: We have a particularly exciting initiative happening in my own community, which is Sault Ste Marie, where all three post-secondary institutions—Lake Superior State University across the river, Algoma College

and Sault College—are beginning to look at ways to work together so that students might be more fully served in our area, which tends to be quite isolated. In these difficult times, it's always nice to be able to allow students to stay home and take advantage of the cost savings that are there, so I suppose that would be encouraged too.

Dr Marsden: Absolutely.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, briefly, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks, Mr Kormos. I just wanted to mention I'm pleased to hear about the changes that are occurring, I think because of the changes in the environment.

I'll just ask a short question to Professor Meltz, because I think I've seen your name associated with labour relations. I'd like to know your view of the future for the cooperation between labour and business on OTAB.

Dr Meltz: I think this is a trend that we're seeing first beginning really at the federal level in terms of the board that's been set up. I think this is the direction things are going in and OTAB would really add to a direction that's already been established. The labour market and productivity centre was really a first stage of that, and then the new labour force board and now I think OTAB. I think it's fundamental. I think it's really fundamental, not just for this decade but really moving us into the next century.

Mr Gary Wilson: And you think it'll work?

Dr Meltz: I think it has to work, because all parties have a stake in it. That doesn't mean that everybody will get everything he wants, and I know we've had some setbacks on the way, but I really think this is the direction that things not only are going but have to go.

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, Mr Offer, Mr Ramsay, please.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much, Ms Marsden, for your presentation. I think it's a very good presentation and, in fact, I think you've been almost too kind in not really demanding your place at the table in a stronger way, because I think it's important. Part of the trouble with the composition of OTAB and its mandate is that it basically ignores the high end of the labour market, which I think is a real shame. You can see that by the composition of the people they want on there. They restrict the professions, for instance. There are a lot of workers out there who are in professions, for example, and other sectors of the economy that aren't represented by unions. We need to have everybody who contributes to the economy of Ontario on there because this is an organization to help everybody in Ontario, not particularly one group of people, and I think that has to be there.

The other factor is, I think you're right to demand your place at the table and I think what the government hasn't differentiated between is having a say and having a vote. I think we could get you to the table but not necessarily move OTAB away from being client-driven. I think you can find mechanisms for dispute resolution that do not necessarily give you more power but get you to the table, and I think I would like to develop some amendments that do that but still make sure the main partners in this, business and labour, are the driving forces, because they're the

customers, and I believe in that, so I support OTAB legislation to that degree.

But that doesn't mean you couldn't be at the table. So we could have a different mechanism for the equity groups and the educators, even though we would now maybe bring them up to numbers equal to the other partners, but maybe somehow restrict how much voting say you'd have. I think we could be examining that and I'm certainly going to do that in bringing forward amendments, so you have that direct say, because you are trainers, for sure.

Dr Marsden: Good. We'll look forward to your amendments, but let me be unequivocal: We would like to be there.

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

Dr Marsden: We think we have a long, long history of training people for the labour force in this province and this country and we want to be there. You have to note things such as that nurses are now all being required to have university degrees, and these are really very significant moves. As skills and technology continue to upgrade, we think we have a very important role to play. So we look forward to your amendments, but we very much want to be there.

Mr Ramsay: I found it very helpful for me also, your wording as far as who the partners should be in providing education. I like that you've said on the top of page 9, "to work in partnership with Ontario's educational and training resources, such as," listing them all out. I think that's the way to do it. I don't like—and you've referred to it further down; as a matter of fact, I'm going to seek to remove it actually all together—that OTAB should not just be there to strengthen, say, publicly funded education but basically to encourage all the partners to provide good training for the people of Ontario. That helps me with the language of what I'd like to bring forward in my amendments, so I certainly appreciate that.

I'd like to ask any of my colleagues if they have any questions they might want to put forward.

Mr McGuinty: Why don't I take advantage of the opportunity? My father was a university academic, so we had a considerable number around the house at different times, and I could swear that if we spoke of university and skills training in the same breath 10 or 15 years ago, that would have been grounds for dismissal, I think, at a university. But I am very happy to see that there have been significant advances in terms of establishing a real nexus with the communities which universities purport to serve.

I note that with respect to the co-op programs almost 80% of the enrolment is connected with one institution: Waterloo. Is there any movement afoot to extend that? That is something that I always thought was very attractive to young people and it lent greater relevance to a university education, particularly with those who require that hands-on experience during the course of their education. Some are obviously more suited to strictly a classroom setting. But is there any movement afoot there to expand that?

1530

Dr Marsden: Obviously, the University of Waterloo has been very important in extending co-op education. The numbers that you see there I think represent the beginnings of what all universities are doing. Students really like it. It brings us much closer to our employers. At Wilfrid Laurier University we are constantly talking to the people who provide co-op placements, because the feedback on what you're doing with your students is absolutely crucial.

In my opinion, it will only expand, but it does of course require the cooperation of employers to provide those spaces. All of that has to go on and it's more expensive.

Dr Shulman: If I could add two quick points. One reason for which Lorna's predictions I think are absolutely destined to become true is that the group of graduates from universities—first of all, university graduates are the most likely to get jobs, and of those graduates, the most likely to get jobs are students who graduate from co-op programs. That fact won't be lost on university students, particularly in a tight market. Secondly, the fact is that increasingly businesses which are having experience with the co-op programs are discovering that it's really good for them too. This isn't charity they're doing. These students know an awful lot and they work very well in a variety of flexible ways. For both those reasons, I think this is something that will just continue to increase in the years ahead.

Dr Marsden: May I just add, partly in response to something Mr Wilson said, that there really is cooperation, but a division of labour between the colleges and the universities. A great many people graduate from university and then go to college for a specific training placement, and many college graduates then come on to university. There are differences among the institutions: the division of labour, but increasing facilitation.

The Chair: The committee expresses its gratitude to you as spokespeople for the Council of Ontario Universities. We appreciate your comments. We trust that you'll be keeping in touch with us if you have new or different things to say and we tell you thank you for taking the time to be here with us this afternoon. Thank you kindly, people.

ONTARIO RACIAL MINORITIES' ORGANIZING COMMITTEE FOR TRAINING

The Chair: The next group is the Ontario Racial Minorities' Organizing Committee for Training. Perhaps the spokespeople for that committee would please come forward, tell us their names, their titles or positions, if any, and proceed with their comments. There's coffee and other beverages at the side. That's not only for members of the committee, but as important, it's for members of the audience who are here, as of right, as members of the public. Please make yourselves at home.

Please go ahead, people. Please try to save the second 15 minutes of the half-hour for exchanges and dialogue.

Ms Kay Blair: My Chairman, my name is Kay Blair and I am the chairperson for the Ontario Racial Minorities' Organizing Committee for Training. I am currently the executive director for community-based training programs

for immigrant and racial minority women in the city of Etobicoke. I'm also the vice-president of the Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants.

Today, racial minorities would like to express their appreciation for the opportunity to address your committee on Bill 96, which seeks to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

On January 15, 1992, members of racial minority groups were invited, alongside representatives from other equity groups, to attend a presentation on the proposed establishment of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. At the conclusion of the presentation, members of racial minorities gathered together to explore the possibilities of setting up a committee to focus around the issues of training.

A preliminary group was established to facilitate the actual coordination of such an effort. This committee then proceeded to extend invitations to other racial minority organizations and communities in Ontario to participate in the process. A decision was made to hold the provincial conference that would, among other things, help to galvanize and inform members of our communities, especially organizations working in the fields of education, training and labour force development.

Another major factor in our planning was the immense diversity of racial minorities in the province of Ontario. We were acutely aware of the importance of opening up the process so that the discussions and the input would be as representative as possible.

I would like to register here our support for this legislation, Bill 96, for two reasons:

(1) We, as racial minorities, believe in the importance of revamping the entire labour force development policies and programs in relation to the dictates of an increasingly competitive global economy.

(2) It is vital that such policies and programs are the result of decisions that will be made with consultation and participation of all sectors of the Ontario community, especially those who encounter barriers and obstacles to participation in the labour force.

ORMOCT recognizes that the economic prosperity for Ontario depends on how globally competitive our labour force becomes in terms of skills and our ability to adapt. A competitive edge in these terms we believe will attract and sustain investment and economic growth in Ontario.

However, the cost of systemic discrimination to the Ontario economy cannot adequately be quantified in this input. It is safe to say that economic competitiveness cannot be achieved in a social environment where individuals or groups of people are forced to the margins of poverty by exclusion from the acquisition of skills and employment opportunities brought about by systemic racism and other forms of discriminatory practices.

One of the most striking revelations of the consultative process held by racial minority communities in the province of Ontario was the high level of interest shown in both access to and quality of education for our young peoples. The argument was made that labour force development and training initiatives, as well as employment equity, are of no

consequence if the educational system is not preparing students for the labour market.

Racial minorities believe that this legislation should be explicit in giving OTAB the mandate to work towards inclusiveness, accessibility and equity, not only in education, training and adjustment programs but also in employment after leaving publicly funded training and apprenticeship programs.

Racial minorities in the province of Ontario believe that the principles of access and equity are the framework in which we can achieve a fair and just society where all citizens will experience the same quality of education and training that will provide them with the skills needed for fair competition in the labour force.

As racial minorities, when we speak of access, equity and the need for employment equity legislation and the implementation of the access to trades and professions report, we are addressing systemic barriers that prevent members of our communities from fully participating in the economy, in the political system and in the full and meaningful life all residents of Canada are entitled to work towards.

We are often asked, what is access? Does employment equity mean the establishment of a quota system, or does it mean that non-designated communities will no longer be hired?

We believe that access is the recognition of and accreditation of our skills and education; it is the right to the same quality of education; it is the right to fair employment, assessment and promotion within; it is the right to meaningful training, recognizing the need for official language training which is critical for our integration into the labour force; it is also the right to uphold our cultural and linguistic values within our commitment to citizenship in Canada.

If we were to adopt equity as the framework in the design and delivery of programs and services of OTAB, special measures would not be needed for total inclusion of marginalized groups.

We must understand that inequities currently exist in the labour force. Measures such as employment equity must be made mandatory to redress these wrongs, and verbal and political commitment must be concretely defined, acted on and enforced.

We would like to present some specific responses to the legislation at this point.

1540

Mr Karanja Njoroge: My name is Karanja Njoroge and I am the provincial nominee to the governing council of OTAB. You've just finished with a university presentation. I also work for the university system, and I'm currently employed by Trent University as their international liaison officer and the director of international programs.

It's essential that the purpose of this act is made as clear as possible, and for that reason we are requesting that clause 1(a) be changed so that it qualifies the statement by including the words "particularly francophones, persons with disabilities, racial minorities and women" after the statement. Another way of dealing with this issue is to include in the definitions of the act the phrase "underrepresented or

disadvantaged groups means francophones, persons with disabilities, racial minorities and women."

We also have a series of other changes that we would like to make, which are separated in the book that we've given you, especially so in the objectives of the act. We believe that the legislation must spell out much more clearly what is expected of OTAB. The following should be changed to clarify their intentions: section 5, section 6, section 9, section 10, section 12, section 14 and section 15, all of them qualifying and making it absolutely clear what it is we intend to do.

If the education system fails, then no other means of intervention will succeed in giving our young people employable skills. Such failure becomes costly as job-related training is impaired due to low literacy and even survival skills of school leavers.

How about the issues of concern to Ontario educators, especially community based training providers, the prime driving force in human resource development in this province, especially in the marginalized communities? Community based training providers have become the most significant point of entry to the labour force for racial minorities. OTAB must enhance and maximize the return on training investments in this sector by ensuring harmony, compatibility and portability of the skills so acquired.

We propose the following change in section 16: We ought to change that item to read, "To seek harmony and compatibility in Ontario's publicly funded education and training systems, within the scope of OTAB's operations, in order to maximize the quality of skills and to ensure cost-effectiveness." I think that change will clarify what the intentions of OTAB really are in terms of involvement in publicly funded education and training systems.

Within racial minority communities, a large percentage of professionals with foreign credentials are either underemployed or unemployed. These are resources that are present within the province that have been largely untapped. We would like prior learning and prior experience to be recognized and taken into account in a more consistent and fair manner as opposed to the arbitrary and ad hoc situation that is currently in place.

It is also true that racial minority adult learners are faced with major barriers in access to training. Vast numbers of racial minority workers are employed in low-paying, non-unionized jobs in the service sector. These are deadend jobs that are protected neither by organized labour nor employers. Such jobs demand long shifts and odd hours. Workers often fear that they are the least thought of when it comes to training and adjustment.

During our consultations all over this province, most racial minority communities, and especially those employed in low-paying and non-unionized jobs, expressed grave concerns and doubts about the kinds of benefits the OTAB initiative might bring to them.

Some professional associations control or restrict access on the basis of protecting the public interest and maintaining standards of such people who are trained outside of Ontario. We find in Ontario, for example, a Pakistan-trained radiologist driving a cab or selling hot dogs in the Toronto streets. We find an Ethiopia-trained registered nurse making

beds in a hotel in Niagara. Why are we wasting the minds of these people?

Credentials evaluation and the determination of education equivalences is one of the areas that OTAB should obviously review. This legislation must therefore acknowledge that mandate. We are proposing an additional objective, which should read:

"To liaise with the relevant departments both in the federal and provincial governments in order to explore joint strategies to ensure access to professions and trades, and a comprehensive system for credentials evaluation and the determination of education equivalences."

Obviously, that should be done in conjunction with the task force on credentials evaluation on professions and trades.

We have assumed that the main tenet and the impetus for the initiative to establish OTAB is the desire to seek honest working partnerships between labour, business, educators and trainers as well as disadvantaged groups in our society. The rationale is that such a partnership will bring together the visions, energies and a variety of resources to deal with what is considered by many as Ontario's biggest crisis, the crisis of skills. All the stakeholders are expected to participate in seeking solutions and avenues for tackling this problem.

In recognizing the parameters of this assumption, we therefore question the composition of OTAB's governing council. Can a governing council comprising primarily business and labour truly represent such concerns of dis-franchised populations as we have identified here? These are questions which you, Mr Chairman, and other legislators must address before this bill is enacted.

Frankly speaking, we all wish we did not have to be here struggling to have our communities' voices heard, their interests safeguarded and their skills employed. We all wish we lived in a society where people are judged not by the colour of their skin or the beliefs of their creed, but by the content of their character and the skills of their intellect.

We are suggesting two changes to section 9, changes that perhaps will bring in line what our concerns are about whom the true partnerships should be with. We propose a tripartite leadership of OTAB between business and labour and other stakeholders, as expressed before you here as we walked in, by the universities, colleges, educators and trainers, community-based trainers, racial minorities and so on.

We suggest that item 2 in section 9 should change so that we have two co-chairs, one representing business and labour and the other representing all the other stakeholders in this partnership. Obviously, section 12 should also change to reflect that change.

The establishment of OTAB should not divest the responsibility of the government of Ontario, as a major buyer of labour as well as the major provider of education and training, to ensure efficiency, effectiveness and quality of labour force development programs. We therefore affirm the concept of dual accountability for OTAB as described in section 4.

The two concepts of accountability and legitimacy, as you will see in our report, can be enhanced through the development and maintenance of local boards, so we are also suggesting that we change section 18 so that we don't leave the legislation as "may" establish local boards, but substituting that "may" with the word "will," so that it is quite clear that "OTAB will designate local training and adjustment boards" in Ontario.

Finally, Mr Chairman, Ontario requires the visionary leadership of men and women who will look beyond the short-term social and political discomforts in addressing the pervasive ills of racism and sexism; a leadership that will acknowledge, however painful, the effects and realities of systemic discrimination in our lives; a leadership that will give the highest priority to the elimination of systemic barriers through anti-racist approaches that respect humanity in all its diversity, approaches that will bestow a sense of hope to the hopeless and offer a supporting hand to the disadvantaged.

But it will also be an approach that will challenge all our peoples to celebrate and accentuate the positive in all of us, an approach that will empower the marginalized, give confidence to the oppressed and encourage excellence in all of us. This approach would ensure the true partnership between the stakeholders who articulate a common goal, that of making our province economically competitive and a better place to live.

Thank you once again for giving us this opportunity to discuss these very important matters with you.

1550

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you, presenters, for this very inclusive and thought-provoking presentation, and congratulations to you, Mr Njoroge, on the confidence shown in you by the rest of the steering committee members that you should be nominated by them.

Mr Njoroge: Thank you.

Mr Gary Wilson: Obviously you have a good grasp of the issues, from the depth of this report. I would like to ask you, though, about the dual accountability you outlined and what you see as being superior to the range we have now. How would that address the concerns you have, first of all for example, that business and labour could come together to agree on a chair for themselves? Do you see that as being any problem in your description of what you'd like to see?

Mr Njoroge: We believe the government of Ontario should not divest itself of the responsibility for being the absolute accountable body of labour force development programs. We'll allow the partners, business, labour and the other stakeholders to make decisions at the governing council, but the ultimate responsibility for the expenditure of public funds in labour force development should be that of the government of Ontario.

What we are suggesting here in terms of dual accountability is that the mechanisms established by treasury board or Management Board and the program or process that is established by the governing council of OTAB should somehow have some congruence in the way OTAB is run. In effect, we are not suggesting a change. We like

the legislation as it is now because it does empower the government to intervene, to create priorities, to instruct the governing council as is appropriate, but allowing it enough flexibility to be innovative and creative in the way it runs its job.

Mr Gary Wilson: You've clearly shown how, or at least expressed your concern with the way the training structures have worked up till now, and I think in the end you very clearly articulated the hopes for OTAB in showing a better future. I'm just wondering whether you think there's enough organization in the community at large to pull together the diverse groups among racial minorities so they can take advantage of the kind of training programs that will be designed, as well as being able to participate in the kinds of programs that are proposed.

Ms Blair: I think there is not a concern in the community whether there is the ability or the capability to pull together programs so that we can participate. I think the problem lies with the actual system in terms of the establishment of OTAB and the actual commitment to totally looking at a new way of doing business that is going to be inclusive.

We are quite aware and knowledgeable about the fact that we currently do not have full access to programs and services, given that there are programs and services available, but the designs of them are not made in our interest. It denies us clear access.

Mr Offer: Thank you very much for your presentation. I want to ask a question about the establishment of local boards. As you might expect, right from the beginning of these hearings there have been many people from the community who have had hands-on experience in terms of training and adjustment and retraining, saying that it is essential that if this is to work, local boards must be created. It cannot be left to any ifs, ands or buts. It must be created, and it must be created by mandate in the legislation. If it isn't, this will fail because it will potentially exclude the community. I'd like to get your thoughts on that.

Mr Njoroge: Actually, our presentation is quite clear on that. We are saying that there is no way OTAB can work without the full consultative process with the communities that you want to bring on board. What we're suggesting here is a change of the legislation so that it is no longer "may designate a local training board," but "OTAB will establish and designate local training boards wherever possible."

We feel that this is very crucial, especially in racial minorities' communities. I think if this is going to be client-driven—which is what we sense, that you want to make sure that the people who want training will access the training and will have a way of accessing that training—then we need to consult with them at a very early stage to see how best that training can be offered, and where and how, the methodologies of it, the mechanisms.

Ms Blair: I think too that it's important that the legislation is strong enough, that it clearly states that OTAB will establish local boards, given the fact that over the summer months when the consultation went across the

province, the actual local board consultation, there were a lot of concerns from different groups of people who felt that in their minds racial minorities were not in certain parts of the province and should not be participating at the local board levels at that time. I firmly believe that it's really important that this legislation is clear enough, that it gives directives for the establishment of the local boards to ensure participation of the community at large.

The Chair: Ms Cunningham, please.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you for a very interesting and inclusive brief. I'm wondering with regard to your tripartite leadership if you had given any thought to the—I'm now looking at section 9. You've got six in there. I'm taking a look at the tripartite part on the board itself. One of the great criticisms we've had here is that education isn't represented to the extent that it ought to be and that maybe some of the other groups, the francophones, disabled, racial minorities and women, should be part of labour, business and education. It's just a thought, and I'd like you to give me your ideas on that.

I think from what you've said so far you have a real understanding of the role of education as far as being the gofer and making things happen, both in our secondary schools, our colleges and universities and in the workplace. Would you think that in tripartite we might make it those three groups, with the others being part of each of the three?

Mr Njoroge: Correct. We were looking here for a realistic option that I think could bring everybody to the table on an equal footing. The way the legislation is proposed here gives too much weight to organized labour and organized business.

I am putting to you that the majority of workers in this province do not belong to organized labour, nor will they ever belong to organized labour, because they will always be employed by mom-and-pop-type operations, small organizations and so on that are not required to organize. That's not to say that labour ought not to be a very important part of this process, but what we are suggesting is, the tripartite arrangement is where you recognize that racial minorities, women and so on could be represented through other mechanisms, through another arm.

You have labour, you have business, you also have other stakeholders that include disadvantaged communities, trainers, community-based training and colleges and universities and schools boards and so on, and that whole group becomes another stakeholder in this whole area, whether they are suppliers of training or actual clients of the training program. So that's a mechanism you're trying to find here.

Mrs Cunningham: I appreciate what you're trying to do here. I was interested in the point you made with regard to the co-chairs, one representing business and labour and one representing the other stakeholders. From what I've heard so far, there's enough argument about having the two separate right now, and to get those two to give one of those responsibilities up may be a very difficult position to take. I'm wondering how you think it would work. Would you alternate? What would you do?

1600

Mr Njoroge: If you really think about partnership, if we're actually saying that labour and business cannot get together and select from among themselves, having agreed on the mandate and so on, someone who can chair their joint effort, then there's some serious problem with that. If each one of them must have a co-chair, then I would say that the government ought to get in and say, "Look, this is the way it's going to be done."

What I'm trying to say is, let's not be driven by interest groups, for God's sake. Let's do it where it will make sense to the common Ontarian that this is what we are trying to do, not to be nice to labour and to be nice to business; we're trying to say that labour and business are important partners, and both of them can work together by creating one co-chair and the other stakeholders can get together and create another co-chair.

I happen to work in the university system, and I know I can speak about the needs of the university system, but I also happen to be in a group that looks after the disadvantaged population, and I can articulate that.

If I ever sat on the board, my interests would be the Ontario economy being a better, more competitive economy. My interest will be Ontario's people having an environment not just of diversity but that also nurtures the creativity and skills of every individual. That would be my role on the board, not to represent one group or the other but hopefully to represent the whole. That is what I think this government should be selling to us, not segregating us.

Ms Blair: If I can just add to your response, Dianne, in terms of having the two co-chairs, I think one of the models that we're presented with at the OTAB level is a process of decision-making being consensus. We all know how difficult it is to work towards consensus, but I think if you have a balance where you've got one co-chair who is directly responsible to business and labour and another co-chair who looks at the interests of the other stakeholders, then when you have that kind of model, arriving at decision-making on a consensus basis is much more likely to happen, because you've got an ability to come together because there is a balance in place.

Mrs Cunningham: I think it's very interesting. Thank you.

The Chair: I have to say thank you to you, Ms Blair and Mr Njoroge, for a very effective presentation. We're grateful to the Ontario Racial Minorities' Organizing Committee for Training for sending you here today to be its spokespeople. You've obviously generated a lot of thought and interest among the members of the committee. I hope we'll be hearing from you as this progresses through committee process and back into third reading.

Ms Blair: Great. Thank you.

Mr Njoroge: Thank you very much.

COMITÉ DIRECTEUR FRANCOPHONE DU COFAM

The Chair: The next participant is the Comité directeur francophone. Welcome, some of you again. Please seat yourselves, tell us who you are in terms of your names and your titles or capacity with the group and please tell us what you will. We've got your submission to

form part of the record by virtue of being made an exhibit. We would like to have the second 15 minutes for questions and dialogue, and of course the outstanding French-language translation staff are doing simultaneous translation, as they do every day when we're in this broadcast room. For those people who wish to avail themselves of receivers, they're in the back of the room, once again free of charge, not that you haven't paid for them, of course, but they're there for your benefit.

Mme Lyne Michaud : Bonjour. Je suis accompagnée de M. Fernand Bégin, président du Comité directeur francophone, et je me présente : Lyne Michaud, porte-parole du Comité directeur francophone.

Le Comité directeur francophone du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre est heureux de présenter au comité permanent du développement des ressources ses suggestions et recommandations afin de bonifier le projet de loi 96.

Je dois aussi vous dire que le Comité directeur francophone, mis sur pied il y a maintenant plus d'un an, est composé des représentants et représentantes de tous les secteurs de notre société soit au niveau des syndicats, des femmes, des municipalités, de l'éducation, des groupes d'équité, du milieu associatif francophone, secteur université, du multiculturalisme, d'alphabétisation, des collèges et de l'économie.

Lors de la présentation du projet de loi relatif à la création du Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre, le ministre responsable du projet de COFAM à l'époque, M. Richard Allen, faisait cette déclaration :

«La clé du succès du nouveau régime de mise en valeur de la main-d'oeuvre qui sera établi par le COFAM est que le pouvoir et les responsabilités seront partagés entre le gouvernement et les personnes qui sont les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins. Ce sont ces personnes que nous appelons les partenaires du marché du travail.»

Dans l'ensemble, le Comité directeur francophone est entièrement d'accord avec cette déclaration. En général, nous croyons que le projet de loi respecte les grandes orientations stratégiques que renferment ces déclarations.

Cependant, le Comité directeur francophone croit que, en ce qui touche la population franco-ontarienne, le projet de loi ne respecte pas la déclaration du ministre Allen, soit celle voulant que «le pouvoir et les responsabilités seront partagés entre le gouvernement et les personnes qui sont les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins».

L'histoire de la communauté franco-ontarienne démontre hors de tout doute que seuls les francophones sont les mieux placés pour connaître les besoins des Franco-Ontariennes et des Franco-Ontariens. Leur passé et leur présent sont jalonnés d'exemples frappants menant à cette constatation.

Par exemple, pendant longtemps, plusieurs avaient affirmé qu'il n'y avait nul besoin de mettre sur pied un collège de langue française en Ontario, qu'il n'y aurait pas de demandes et que les francophones n'en voudraient pas. Aujourd'hui, après seulement trois ans d'existence, la Cité collégiale compte plusieurs milliers d'étudiantes et d'étudiants avec un taux de placement très élevé, et cela n'est

qu'un seul exemple. Il y a les cliniques telles que le Centre médico-social communautaire de Toronto, l'existence de conseils scolaires de langue française, la Chaîne française de TVOntario et plusieurs autres qui méritent également droit de cité.

Pourtant, le projet de loi 96, dans sa forme actuelle, ne permet pas aux Franco-Ontariennes et Franco-Ontariens d'assumer pleinement le rôle qui leur revient, c'est-à-dire celui de définir, au sein de la structure du COFAM et des commissions locales, les besoins des francophones ; de contrôler les sommes d'argent étiquetées pour les besoins de formation et d'adaptation de la communauté franco-ontarienne et de les acheminer là où les besoins sont clairement définis et réels ; de planifier, de gérer et de coordonner l'offre de formation et d'adaptation en fonction des besoins très particuliers de la population franco-ontarienne et en fonction aussi des caractéristiques uniques des communautés franco-ontariennes des diverses régions de la province.

Bien que le ministre de la Formation professionnelle et responsable du projet du COFAM ait clairement dit que les pouvoirs et les responsabilités soient partagés entre le gouvernement et les personnes qui sont les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins, le projet de loi 96 ne permet pas pour autant un tel état de fait. Autrement dit, le projet de loi ne prévoit pas, du moins pour l'instant, à la communauté franco-ontarienne d'assumer les pouvoirs et les responsabilités qui lui reviennent dans le dossier du COFAM.

À l'heure actuelle, le projet de loi prévoit un seul siège francophone au sein de la structure du COFAM sans juridiction exclusive sur la formation et l'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre franco-ontarienne. Le ministre de la Formation professionnelle et responsable du projet du COFAM avait effectivement promis que deux autres membres de la communauté franco-ontarienne — une représentation patronale et une représentation syndicale — seraient appelés à siéger à la table du COFAM.

Cela n'est, toutefois, pas prévu dans le projet de loi et s'effectuerait de manière ad hoc. Même si un appui existait chez le patronat et le monde des syndicats à cet effet, la population franco-ontarienne ne saurait se satisfaire d'une assurance officieuse. Un remaniement ministériel ou un nouveau gouvernement au pouvoir pourrait rapidement faire disparaître ce genre de promesse. Nous connaissons tous et toutes le célèbre dicton voulant que les paroles s'envolent mais les écrits restent. Le Comité directeur francophone n'a d'autre choix que de demander une assurance concrète.

Si le COFAM doit être un instrument de développement efficace pour la communauté franco-ontarienne et si la communauté franco-ontarienne doit, à son tour, être en mesure d'utiliser ses énergies et son dynamisme au profit des orientations stratégiques du COFAM, il faut aller au-delà des promesses qui, en politique, retombent souvent en poussière au lendemain d'un changement quelconque.

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L'Entente Canada-Ontario sur la mise en valeur de la main-d'œuvre signée le 24 octobre 1991 offre un cadre d'intervention qui, à notre avis, permet non seulement aux deux paliers de gouvernement de mettre en place la struc-

ture proposée, mais aussi une structure qui respecte les droits des Franco-Ontariennes et des Franco-Ontariens. Bien plus, cette même structure, si elle respecte ces droits, permettrait à la population franco-ontarienne de contribuer activement à la mise en oeuvre de la stratégie de la mise en valeur de la main-d'œuvre ontarienne.

Par cette Entente, l'Ontario et le Canada proclament conjointement et solidairement à l'article 1 de l'Entente :

«Les francophones sont clairement reconnus comme un groupe désigné parce que sous-représentés en matière d'emploi et de formation, mais aussi parce qu'on reconnaît que des obstacles les empêchent de faire partie à part entière de la main-d'œuvre active.»

À l'article 2 de l'Entente, section (f) :

«Le Canada et l'Ontario devront collaborer afin de faire en sorte que les membres des groupes sous-représentés au sein de la main-d'œuvre, les prestataires d'assurance-chômage, les francophones, les travailleurs déplacés et les assistés sociaux aient accès sans restriction aux programmes de formation subventionnés par le gouvernement.»

À l'article 5.1 de l'Entente :

«Le Canada et l'Ontario reconnaissent que les gouvernements ont pour tâche de promouvoir l'équité dans les domaines de la formation, des métiers et de l'emploi et que le mot "équité" signifie de meilleures chances d'accès à la formation, aux métiers et à l'emploi pour les groupes sous-représentés en matière de formation, de même que pour les groupes que des obstacles empêchent d'être représentés à part entière au sein de la population active.»

À l'article 5.4 de l'Entente :

«Le Canada et l'Ontario conviennent que des mesures appropriées seront prises en vue de permettre aux femmes... aux francophones et aux travailleurs âgés d'avoir plus facilement accès à leurs programmes respectifs de mise en valeur de la main-d'œuvre et d'y participer avec succès.»

Enfin, à l'article 5.15 de l'Entente :

«Le Canada et l'Ontario mettront conjointement en place des mesures spéciales pour la formation des francophones.»

Ensuite, le rapport de la consultation sur les commissions locales, intitulé Dialogue communautaire sur la formation et les commissions locales, affirme que :

«Le faible niveau d'éducation des francophones est considéré comme un problème très important attribuable à des structures d'éducation et de formation inadéquates. Les participantes et participants ont souligné les lacunes qui existent dans plusieurs secteurs, dont le nombre insuffisant d'établissements d'enseignement francophones, le choix et la qualité médiocres des programmes et des services de formation en français, et le manque de matériel et de ressources didactiques en français. Par exemple, seulement 70 des 350 programmes d'études des collèges communautaires et 13 des 600 programmes d'apprentissage sont offerts en français en Ontario.»

L'élément le plus frappant dans le rapport, du moins en ce qui concerne la communauté franco-ontarienne, est le fait que la commission de consultation n'a pu omettre de

présenter une conclusion on ne peut plus évidente. La commission l'exprime ainsi :

«En conséquence, les francophones ont soutenu que pour améliorer leur infrastructure de formation, ils doivent exiger la gestion de la formation professionnelle par et pour les francophones.»

Bref, le rapport conclut inévitablement que :

«Peu importe la structure organisationnelle choisie pour le COFAM et les commissions locales, le principe de la gestion de la formation professionnelle par et pour les francophones doit être respecté.»

La contribution et l'apport de la communauté franco-ontarienne au développement de l'Ontario dans son ensemble est également un facteur de poids dans toute l'équation.

La gestion de la formation par et pour les francophones de l'Ontario est, pour ces derniers, la clef de l'avenir, un avenir meilleur non seulement pour eux mais pour tout l'Ontario. Et c'est lorsqu'elle dispose des outils nécessaires que la communauté franco-ontarienne devient une incroyable source de dynamisme et d'énergie.

Avec les profondes transformations partout sur notre globe et la nécessité de mettre en marche des produits dans quelque 50 pays francophones à travers le monde, l'Ontario a besoin d'expertises francophones pour se développer et relever le défi des années 2000.

Pour l'instant et malgré ses grandes richesses, l'Ontario doit plus souvent qu'autrement importer ces expertises. Par conséquent, le Comité directeur francophone est fondamentalement convaincu que, pour appuyer la province dans son développement et pour assurer l'épanouissement de la communauté franco-ontarienne, l'Ontario français doit définir, prioriser, planifier, contrôler et gérer la formation et l'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre francophone.

S'il doit véritablement y avoir un partage des pouvoirs et des responsabilités entre le gouvernement et les personnes qui sont les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins, et dans le cas qui nous occupe il s'agit des francophones, le Comité directeur francophone exige que les principes suivants soient inscrits dans le projet de loi.

Ce sera là la seule et véritable assurance qu'auront les Franco-Ontariennes et les Franco-Ontariens de pouvoir jouer leur rôle pleinement au niveau de la définition, de la priorisation, de la planification, de la coordination et de la gestion de la formation et de l'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre francophone.

Par conséquent, le Comité directeur francophone présente les amendements suivants pour incorporer dans le projet de loi proposé. Pour le premier amendement, au paragraphe 9(2), membres du conseil d'administration, le texte se lit comme suit :

«Le conseil d'administration se compose des vingt-deux membres suivants, nommés par le lieutenant-gouverneur en conseil :

«1. Deux coprésidents, l'un représentant le patronat et l'autre, les travailleurs.

«2. Sept représentants du patronat.

«3. Sept représentants des travailleurs.»

Le paragraphe 9(2) amendé se lirait comme suit :

«Le conseil d'administration se compose des vingt-deux membres suivants, nommés par le lieutenant-gouverneur en conseil :

«1. Deux coprésidents, l'un représentant le patronat et l'autre, les travailleurs.

«2. Sept représentants du patronat, dont au moins un francophone.

«3. Sept représentants des travailleurs, dont au moins un francophone.»

Deuxième amendement, au paragraphe 12(2), réunions, le texte se lit comme suit :

«Au moins deux réunions des membres du conseil d'administration par année sont ouvertes au public.»

Le paragraphe amendé se lirait comme suit :

«Sauf dans des circonstances exceptionnelles, les réunions des membres du conseil d'administration sont ouvertes au public.»

Troisième amendement, au paragraphe 15(2), conflict of interest, le texte anglais se lit comme suit :

«The directors shall pass bylaws dealing with conflict of interest, which may impose restrictions on directors' activities.»

Le paragraphe amendé en anglais se lirait comme suit :

«The directors shall pass bylaws dealing with conflict of interest, which shall impose restrictions on directors' activities.»

Le paragraphe amendé en français corrige, dans le premier cas, l'erreur de la traduction et se conforme, dans le deuxième cas, à l'anglais :

«Les membres du conseil d'administration devront adopter des règlements administratifs traitant des conflits d'intérêts, lesquels imposeront des restrictions sur les activités des membres du conseil d'administration.»

Quatrième amendement, à l'article 16, administrateur en chef et autres employés, on propose d'ajouter les deux paragraphes suivants :

«(9) Le COFAM établira une direction des services en français, composée des membres francophones siégeant au corps dirigeant et des membres francophones siégeant aux conseils, de l'administrateur en chef ainsi que du chef de la direction francophone nommé par l'administrateur en chef en consultation avec les membres de la direction des services en français.

«(10) La direction des services en français sera chargée des orientations générales, de la mise en application, de l'évaluation et de la gestion des budgets rattachés aux programmes français de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.»

Cinquième et dernier amendement, à l'article 25, prévisions budgétaires, le texte se lit comme suit :

«Chaque année avant la fin de l'exercice, les membres du conseil d'administration soumettent les prévisions budgétaires du COFAM pour l'exercice suivant à l'examen et à l'approbation du ministre.»

L'article amendé se lirait comme suit :

«Chaque année avant la fin de l'exercice, les membres du conseil d'administration soumettent les prévisions budgétaires du COFAM pour l'exercice suivant à l'examen et à l'approbation du ministre. Les prévisions budgétaires

doivent identifier les sommes allouées aux besoins de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre francophone.»

Partenaire dynamique et déterminée, la communauté franco-ontarienne maintient un vif engagement envers le développement et l'épanouissement de l'Ontario et de sa communauté, et démontre une très grande capacité de se prendre en main et de gérer son développement.

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Son désir de prendre en main la formation et l'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre par et pour les francophones est loin d'être un caprice. Elle participe activement et vivement au processus évolutif de ce dossier depuis le tout début. La communauté franco-ontarienne à maintes fois a démontré qu'elle embrasse les principes du partenariat et de la prise en main. Encore faudrait-il lui donner l'occasion de la faire en matière de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'œuvre francophone.

Le gouvernement affirme clairement l'importance de partager les responsabilités et les pouvoirs avec les personnes les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins. Face à la communauté franco-ontarienne, les personnes les mieux placées pour connaître les besoins de cette communauté sont, de toute évidence, les francophones.

M. McGuinty : Merci beaucoup pour votre présentation.

Vous nous dites aujourd'hui que vous voulez avoir votre propre système géré par vous-mêmes, par la francophonie. Nous avons maintenant un problème, dans la ville d'Ottawa, avec un conseil scolaire, le conseil de langue française, secteur public. Vous connaissez peut-être un peu le problème que nous avons là-bas. J'ai eu la chance de parler avec un groupe de parents — en effet, plusieurs groupes de parents — et ils me disent à maintes reprises qu'ils n'ont jamais voulu avoir leur propre conseil scolaire, parce que maintenant ils trouvent qu'ils n'ont pas le «tax base» pour recevoir assez d'argent pour faire fonctionner un conseil comme il faut. Je me demande, si l'on pense un peu au futur, si c'est possible qu'on rencontrerait encore ce problème si on avait un système distinct pour les francophones de l'Ontario.

Mme Michaud : Ce que le Comité directeur francophone prône depuis le début, c'est la gestion pour et par les francophones ; à savoir si c'est un futur indépendant, c'est une autre question. Nous, on veut travailler ensemble, en partenariat. Par exemple, en Ontario, au niveau du ministère de l'Éducation, il existe la loi 75, qui permet aux francophones de gérer leur propre système d'éducation à l'intérieur d'une structure déjà existante. C'est la même chose que le Comité directeur francophone. On ne veut pas créer des structures indépendantes ; on veut créer des structures ensemble, en partenariat, des structures dans le système proposé, dans le cadre proposé, dans le corps dirigeant qui va permettre aux Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes de gérer leur propre formation.

M. McGuinty : Là, je comprends. Merci.

Mrs Cunningham : I'm wondering with regard to a couple of the other presentations earlier that I think you may have been here for, with regard to the makeup of the OTAB board itself. I posed a question before, sort of a

tripartite approach—business, labour and education—with the other minority groups being represented in all three. Did you give that any thought.

Mme Michaud : Ce qu'il faut comprendre au niveau de la spécificité de la communauté franco-ontarienne, c'est que dans notre propre communauté nous avons aussi des femmes, nous avons aussi des personnes handicapées et nous avons aussi les autres groupes d'équité. La différence entre les autres groupes d'équité, c'est que les francophones ne sont pas garantis d'une représentation équitable. Alors, nous appuyons les autres groupes d'équité en ce qui concerne les femmes, les personnes handicapées et les minorités visibles. Mais nous, la différence avec ces groupes-là, c'est au niveau de la langue, c'est les services en français. Alors, il faut comprendre que dans notre propre communauté, nous avons une communauté qui est plus pluriethnique. Nous avons une communauté aussi où il y a des femmes et des personnes handicapées. Donc, c'est important que ces groupes d'équité-là, en plus du milieu des syndicats et travailleurs puis les francophones, soient représentés pour assurer les services dans notre langue, qui est le français.

Mr Gary Wilson : Thank you for your presentation. We've heard several today and they made the points very clearly for a greater representation, but one community we heard today, one presentation, was from the multicultural francophone community which was concerned that the, I guess, francophone community couldn't speak for it, or at least the representative who is now on the board. I was wondering what your view of that is.

Mme Michaud : L'Association interculturelle franco-ontarienne a décidé de se joindre au Comité directeur francophone. Leur choix a été de ne pas siéger au comité directeur des minorités visibles parce que, selon eux, les services dont ils ont besoin sont au niveau de la langue, en français.

Alors, c'est pour ça que la communauté pluriethnique en Ontario a décidé de se joindre à notre communauté où nous les représentons et où ils siègent activement. Nous appuyons les revendications des autres communautés ethnoculturelles en Ontario, mais la différence, c'est qu'elles veulent des services en français. Donc, c'est pour ça que, ensemble, nous voulons avoir la gestion pour et par les Franco-Ontariens et les Franco-Ontariennes, pour avoir accès aux programmes en français.

Mr Gary Wilson : Also, the amendments you suggest stipulate that one of the nominees from both business and labour would a francophone. You realize that already there are provisions in the appointment by government that the nominees be representative of Ontario's makeup. So that possibility is there already.

I'm just wondering whether with one director already representing the francophone community and the possibility of there being more, and with the provision of Bill 8 that in areas where the numbers of the francophone community warrant, the services will be there—thirdly, when you suggest that you're looking for a partnership and not, it seems, a separate structure, if I heard you correctly, do you not think then that there will be the provision of

French-language training where it is needed or where the numbers warrant say. In workplaces, it probably would be working in the French language already.

Mme Michaud : En ce qui concerne la représentation au niveau syndical et des travailleurs, on nous a dit qu'il est prévu qu'il y aura une représentation francophone mais il n'y a rien de légiféré ; ce n'est pas dans le texte de la loi. Nous, ce qu'on veut, ce sont des garanties pour s'assurer, peu importe ce qui arrivera avec les gouvernements en place à l'avenir, qu'il y ait un francophone. Alors, pour nous, ce n'est pas satisfaisant de dire qu'il y aura peut-être la possibilité ou qu'il y a une bonne volonté. Nous, ce qui nous intéresse, c'est une question de garantie avec une représentation francophone.

En ce qui concerne la Loi 8 et les 22 régions qui sont désignées, c'est une question d'offrir les services en français. Pour la formation professionnelle, plusieurs groupes d'intérêt revendiquent de nouveaux programmes qui ne sont pas satisfaisants. En ce qui concerne notre communauté, nous n'avons même pas de programmes en français au niveau des services municipaux ou de rattrapage.

Alors, c'est pour ça que nous revendiquons la gestion pour et par, parce qu'en plus d'avoir des services en français, notre communauté a beaucoup de rattrapage à faire. Nous ne sommes pas au même niveau que les autres groupes. Plusieurs groupes — par exemple, les communautés, les groupes des femmes, les groupes raciaux, les personnes handicapées — ont déjà des programmes de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre. Ce n'est pas le cas pour notre communauté au niveau des services en français. Les programmes que nous voulons ne sont pas la traduction ; nous voulons des programmes qui vont répondre spécifiquement aux besoins de notre communauté.

The Chair: Ms Michaud, we thank you as a committee and you Mr Bégin, once again, for taking the time to be here. You have provided the committee with some insightful and provocative insights into the bill. That's clear from the types of exchanges you've had with people on the committee. I trust you'll be tracking the bill as it goes through the committee and then back into the Legislature for third reading. I would encourage you to please keep in touch with all or any of the members of the committee should you have more things to say or further insights. So thank you kindly.

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THUNDER BAY AND DISTRICT INJURED WORKERS SUPPORT GROUP

The Chair: The next participant is the Thunder Bay and District Injured Workers Support Group. They've got spokesperson or a spokesperson here. Come forward. Have a seat. Tell us your name, sir, and what your capacity is, if there is any title, with the support group. Please, try to save the last 15 minutes for questions and exchanges.

Mr Steve Mantis: My name is Steve Mantis and I'm the treasurer of the Thunder Bay and District Injured Workers Support Group. It may only last another day because tomorrow is our annual general meeting and you never can tell what happens when the elections come up again.

Mrs Cunningham: You're telling us.

Mr Mantis: That's right.

Interjections.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr Mantis.

Mr Mantis: We all take our turn.

The Thunder Bay and District Injured Workers Support Group is a self-help group composed of injured workers, family members and their supporters. We're an organization that began in 1984 and our goal is to advocate on behalf of injured workers to provide a better life for those people.

First, I just want to thank you for allowing us this opportunity to present before you today. The reason I'm here and the reason injured workers are interested in what's taking place with OTAB is because injured workers want to go back to work. We have taken a survey among our membership and we asked them to prioritize their goals; what they wanted us as an organization to do to represent them best. Over 90% of the people said their number one goal was to return to work.

It becomes quite difficult, once you've sustained a disabling injury, to return to that same employment. There are a number of factors involved in that process and one of the key factors we've identified is training. A large majority of the people who get hurt in industry, in serious accidents that develop and permanent disabilities, are from heavy physical occupations, particularly in the north where our economy revolves around resources extraction. We've got forest industry, mining and construction. You're there because you've got a strong back and you can carry out heavy physical activities. Once you lose that capacity, you're not wanted in that job any more and now you've got to somehow find a way to provide for your family.

I think all the members of Parliament pretty well know that workers' compensation is not something you can really count on to make those ends meet, and the goal really for injured workers here is to get back to work. This has certainly piqued our interest in OTAB but also created a question: What will OTAB do for injured workers? And we're not sure. We've participated in the process. We've kept up to date on the developments and so far we like what we see.

Two of the key components we want to deal with today are the area of representation and the area of accommodation. I will deal with one and then the other.

First, representation: The board of directors or governing body of OTAB is structured to represent initially the two labour market partners and then some other interest groups. I think that's a good start. We would like to see, though, within that structure a more equal representation of some of the other target groups.

Ms Cunningham here posed a question earlier about, is it possible to integrate representation into the workers' group or the employers' group? This is an avenue we have pursued and think it's a possibility, but it has to be done in a way that ensures that representation is actually taking place.

In organized labour, this is something people are fairly familiar with. You have a process of elections and choosing

representation and there's a means of accountability, and organized labour is very strong, but without that, you can't sit on that side that says "labour."

Well, they've got a good point, and it's one that I think is valid in all circumstances when we begin to look at representation. Whether it is in the different target groups—the education community, the employer community, the worker community—we need to ensure that the people we have up there are actually representing someone and are accountable to someone. So when we look at those eight seats the workers' side might have, we would have to look at a way to be able to include some of those target groups but with a level of accountability.

The one offer we put to the federation of labour was to put one of those seats as a representative of injured workers. Injured workers are in that group of people with disabilities. But it would have to be in a way that that seat was accountable to an organization that was democratically controlled and that person reported back to the people he or she is supposed to represent. So the person's a worker with a disability, and that's the line of accountability.

I think, from our point of view, we would encourage—I don't know how you can do it in law, but it's something that's worth thinking about—when we set up the parameters for these groups, that we either encourage or in some fashion see if we can get a representation that reflects the community at large in its eight members, with clearly that level of accountability. We don't want to replace an employer with someone who just represents women, but perhaps we could have someone who represents women-business on the body. She's representing business but she's representing that particular group.

What I've seen so far in terms of the some of the background material that has been assembled for OTAB in terms of the reference groups that would be supporting those positions on the OTAB governing body I think are very good. Groups that don't have an economic base to begin with need to have some support from the state to ensure that the person who's sitting on the governing body represents them, and that can mean money for people to communicate, to consult with each other, to have meetings, to meet with their representative, to make sure they know what this person's doing on the governing body and ensure that he or she is following the instructions of the group. I think what's taken place there so far is definitely a positive step. I was quite pleased when I saw the draft report on that.

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They also talked about developing the role for that member and a level of accountability so that the reference group, if it was unhappy with the performance of its member, could recall him. I think that's an important component too.

It's very easy, once you get into those fancy boardrooms and eating a nice lunch, to forget where you came from. It's important to always be reminded of where you came from and have someone there who is pulling on your chain or just keeping you in place.

I think the other area I want to talk about is accommodation. Where do you all come from, anyway? "Accom-

modation" is kind of a new word for us. It's really just in the last five years that we've had it applying to people with disabilities in the vocabulary. We've got a little quote in here about equality. This is from Rosalie Abella in her Ontario Law Reform Commission. She said, "Sometimes equality means treating people the same despite their differences, and sometimes it means treating them as equals by accommodating their differences."

What that means to me is that you've got a person with a disability. They want to work just like anybody else but they've got certain limitations. They may not be able to sit in a chair for eight hours, so for them to go to school and have to sit there all day and cram and figure out with their backs just going nuts, they can't do it. So we have to look at a way of accommodating them, and that may mean extending the term of the course so that they go for three years rather than two, so that they're able to spend four hours a day rather than six hours a day there. They can learn just like anyone else, but physically they've got some accommodations. So when we're looking at OTAB, we want to look at ensuring that any training programs that take place have the mandate that accommodation has to take place.

We have training programs in Thunder Bay at the Ontario Business College that are on the second floor and then you've got to go up a steep set of stairs. That means a whole bunch of people can't ever use that facility for training. That's just one of the obvious ones, but the other one of reorganizing the schedule of training is a more subtle one. There isn't a blueprint that you can use. You can't say: "Oh, well, here's this person with this disability. We know this is what we have to do." It's an interactive process of talking to the individual and working out a plan that is going to be successful. That same accommodation should flow throughout all the activities of OTAB, starting with the governing body, and some accommodation has already been made there.

There is an agreement on the table that the person representing disabilities can have an alternate who can function as an equal and as a peer because sometimes, with disabilities, you're not able to make it to every meeting every day and you have to have someone else there who knows and is aware and is up to snuff who can just step in and take your place. That's one example of accommodation. We very much encourage that accommodation be written into the act and not be left to people's goodwill as it goes down the road.

I guess I should just wrap up. Really, the question is where injured workers fit in with this. This has really created concern for us because we see positive things happening with OTAB and we're not seeing such positive things happening right now with the Workers' Compensation Board in terms of being successful at retraining people. There doesn't seem to be any commitment there. At the same time, we go to training agencies that are presently providing training and they say: "Sorry, we can't help you. You're on WCB. You're looked after over there. You'll have to go talk to them because there's nothing we can do for you."

We're not too comfortable with that and we don't have an answer. It's not really addressed in the documents so far that deal with OTAB, and the Workers' Compensation Board doesn't really have a position other than that we should work together. Well, good idea, but what that means is, let's write down on a piece of paper what's going to happen, what role OTAB's going to have in providing training for injured workers and what role the WCB is going to have here, and let's make it clear.

Let's make sure the people who need the training know how to access it, are able to access it, get training, go back to work and become useful, productive members of society again. That's what we're after, and we certainly hope you'll help us out in that. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Ms Cunningham, four minutes please.

Mrs Cunningham: I listened carefully to your presentation this afternoon with regard to representation and accommodation, and I'm sharing your views. I'm not particularly optimistic, with the structure, that injured workers will be served well.

I'm wondering if you have recommendations other than the one that is in the legislation right now. I'm looking at section 9, the OTAB board itself representing persons with disabilities. Are you suggesting we say "represent injured workers" there? Is that what you want? What do you want? You've heard my questioning so far. I'm totally convinced you're not going to have any voice in the given structure and I haven't heard any good suggestions as to how you will have, although I'm extremely concerned about it. I can tell you what I think, but I want to know what you think.

Mr Mantis: It's not that simple. At the present time there is some representation from injured workers on the reference group for people with disabilities. In fact the individual who has been chosen was himself injured at work. He's a person with a disability and is active in the disabled movement, but he himself is an injured worker. Now, he's not a representative of injured workers. Our position in this brief is that there is an additional seat that is specifically for a representative of injured workers.

Mrs Cunningham: On the OTAB board?

Mr Mantis: Yes. As I mentioned, we have approached the Ontario Federation of Labour with that in mind.

Mrs Cunningham: And what have they said?

Mr Mantis: They said, "Things are too far down the road at this point for us to be able to include that, but we would definitely support that in terms of the local boards."

Mrs Cunningham: If we took that point of view in this committee, there would be no point in having any public hearings. Hopefully, we're not taking that point of view, but we will find out.

Interjection.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mrs Cunningham. Don't let yourself get sidetracked.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm trying hard not to, although it's very difficult.

I'll tell you how I feel, because I'm very interested in what you're talking about. I think you are still going to have to work very hard with the Minister of Health. Keep the agencies and programs that are going now and build upon them separate from this board, which I think is going to be a big, bureaucratic mess, given what I've heard so far. I want to be optimistic, but I'm not. I might be more optimistic at the end of these hearings if some of the suggestions are taken.

1650

I think you're going to have to work very hard with Community and Social Services so that it does not cut back programs; I'm not talking about job shadowing and those kinds of things that injured workers who are retraining really need. It's almost one to one, as you well know, to get that kind of support to be retrained and have agencies and the private sector work with injured workers. I think it's a very difficult task but a very important one. It's something that I do in my community and I see very little hope for it here, and that's why I was asking those questions.

I thought we should have had the three tripartites and the people within those groups represented, because they do exist in business, injured workers; they do exist in education groups, injured workers; and so do they in labour, organized and otherwise. Thank you for being here on behalf of your group, because you are basically ignored, as you can well imagine, in this province.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Cunningham. Mr Farnan, and then Mr Sutherland, if there's enough time.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): I want to thank you for an excellent presentation. My friend John Sweeney of the injured workers in the K-W area would endorse, I think, the very logical process of thought that you brought to the committee this afternoon.

I think one thing about injured workers is, as they reflect on issues, they've had to develop patience over the years. There haven't been quick solutions and I'm glad to see that this isn't despair, as opposed to the reaction of my good friend and colleague Miss Cunningham. Rather than say the world is dark, things can't change, you come along with thoughtful suggestions and—

Mrs Cunningham: We'll see what they do with it.

Mr Farnan: I'm an optimist and I do believe this government is sensitive to the concerns of injured workers and we will want to work along with you.

I want to ask you a couple of questions and leave it for you to elaborate. What are the features that you would see of a training system that should be put in place to facilitate the return of the injured worker to the workforce in a timely manner? What are the features of a system, had you got a handle on the levers of power, that you would put in place?

Mr Mantis: I would have to respond personally and not as a representative of our organization, because we haven't got a position on this. But what I have seen is that the partnership model seems to be the most successful and what I'm really referring to is the German experience, where workers and employers work hand in hand to ensure that these people go to work.

What that means is that both those parties are involved throughout the whole process. They're involved in determining what the training programs are; involved in developing the curriculum for those training programs; involved in evaluating the training programs; and involved in employing those people. What that means is that those two labour market partners are the best judges of knowing what the market is, knowing what kinds of jobs are needed, what type of training is needed and are in the best position to ensure that the person gets employed.

Mr Farnan: Mr Chair, if there's time, I'll hand over to my colleague.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Mantis, you mentioned earlier about everyone recognizing the inadequacy of the workers' compensation system. I want to tell you that not everyone does. The leader of the third party was quoted in the *Toronto Sun* last week as saying part of the problem with the Workers' Compensation Board is that the benefits are too high because everyone's getting 90% of their income. The people who come into my office aren't getting 90% of their pre-injury income, but that was the view that was expressed and that's how we can solve some of the problems. I think your group still has to do some education of some people about some of the problems around workers' comp and injured workers.

The Chair: Mr Mantis, if you don't want to respond to that, we'll move on. I don't know what you would focus your response on, so maybe we'll just go over here to Mr Ramsay or Mr Offer.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Mantis, thanks very much for your presentation. If the government party doesn't mind, I'd like to bring it back to OTAB and your presentation, because I think it was important and I'd like to talk to you about the reference groups. You make a very good point that you want to see the reference groups organized so there's accountability in both directions, between the appointed person for that jurisdiction and that reference group. Do you have a sense of what mechanism we could use to do that, to accomplish that accountability?

Mr Mantis: I don't know if you've seen some of the draft documents that have been prepared, I guess, by the staff working with OTAB, but what I see there is a good start. They're defining that there would be funding through OTAB for the reference groups. The reference groups began to lay out some of the factors or the criteria for review of directors.

I've never seen anything like this before, where there's some idea that the people we appoint are actually accountable and can be called to task by the people they represent. This is great as far as I'm concerned. The stuff I see here I think is a good start. I like it. It has to be put on paper; it has to be clear; it has to lay out people's responsibilities, their roles and who they are accountable to in a democratic fashion.

Mr Ramsay: I agree with you. A lot of the difficulty many of us are having with the legislation is that so much of it is not spelled out, and that's been the problem. There are ideas. We see some interesting suggestions in the discussion material you refer to, but nothing really that clear

spelled out in the legislation. We'd like to see the legislation beefed up so that more of this is spelled out. I think my colleague would like to bring up a point.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. As I was listening to your presentation and the concerns you had with the legislation, though I think, in fairness, supporting it in principle, it struck me that maybe you would want to say you need a say and maybe you shouldn't be part of OTAB. You should almost be taking the position, "I don't want to be part of OTAB because of the fact that I might not be having a say," in terms of the direction you believe you should have, and I think a lot of people would agree with you. I'd like, if I might, to get your thoughts on that. I will tell you why I say that.

We know OTAB is what's called a schedule 4 agency. This is a new creature. When I take a look at what a schedule 4 agency is by the government, it says it's going to be completely funded out of the revenue generated by its programs. When I further look into it, I see that the new schedule 4 agency is very similar to what are called schedule 2 agencies. An example of a schedule 2 agency happens to be Ontario Hydro. It seems to me that what we've got here is the Ontario Hydro for training. I would like to get your thoughts as to your position in the event that you don't have the say, the position, in terms of the direction of OTAB.

Mr Mantis: It seems to me that whether we have a say or not in terms of OTAB, in the north OTAB is going to set the agenda for training, so if we don't have a part in it we're left out. It's either through someone's goodwill or good planning that we get included. But when the training dollars get funnelled through one agency, that's all the training that's going to be taking place in Thunder Bay and in northwest Ontario. If that doesn't meet our needs, we're out of luck. The compensation board is not going to develop training programs. We have to either fit into this or we're just left out in the cold like we have been for years and years.

1700

The Chair: Mr Mantis, I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for coming here from the northwest to make the views of your group known. The Thunder Bay and District Injured Workers Support Group has a long-time history of speaking articulately and effectively for workers and injured workers, for not only Thunder Bay but of course across the province, and we are grateful to you and your organization for showing the interest and for taking the time to share your views with us.

It's obviously an important part of the process and I'm trusting you'll report back to your colleagues that the members of the committee from all three caucuses were caught by some of the observations that you made and provoked, to say the least, by some of your comments. And yes, I agree with you: That's a very healthy thing. Thank you kindly. Have a safe trip back to Thunder Bay.

Mr Mantis: Thank you very much. I could leave a copy of our prepared—it's short, but—

The Chair: Sure.

Mr Mantis: As a voluntary organization, we weren't able to make 30 copies, but we've got one here for you.

The Chair: I'm pleased to accommodate you. Thank you kindly.

PERFORMANCE PLUS

The Chair: The next participant is Better Training Bureau. If those people will please come forward and have a seat, tell us who they are. Please try to save the second half of the 30-minute time slot for questions and exchanges.

Mr Fraser Bannerman: Good afternoon, Chairman. My name is Fraser Bannerman. I represent Performance Plus. I don't know who the Better Training Bureau is exactly, but there should be one if there isn't.

I am a private trainer and I've come here essentially today to talk to you about three, possibly four, issues. We are what's known as a mom-and-pop shop, a small organization that provides training in the area of people skills.

I first became aware of OTAB's initiatives and what was going on in terms of a whole restructuring and reorganization of training initiatives in Ontario last fall as a result of APTO, the Association of Professional Training Organizations. Some of you may know APTO as an organization. Can I get a little response here to know whether you've heard members from APTO, private trainers, speak or not? I just want to know.

Mr Farnan: All the time.

Mr Bannerman: All the time. We inundate you, is that it?

Mr Sutherland: We've had several.

Mr Bannerman: All right. At the risk of some repetition but certainly from a more subjective point of view—because I'm not an expert in stats of what's going on out there in the field, but I do have some pretty hard experience of what it's like to compete out there and sell our programs and in fact make an impact, as we have in the past, on the quality of training that is provided for Ontario business.

Let me start out just talking about the JOTF for a moment, if I may, the Jobs Ontario training fund. I personally have a document, if you will, that is about the assessment of people skills, a broad-stroke thing that covers every possible area of people skills from communication through team-building through customer service, all of that kind of thing, 16 areas, including stress management. It goes on and on; anyway, it's very comprehensive.

I addressed the JOTF central office about whether this would be a useful document for the brokers, because obviously brokers were being installed in positions of authority to administer training funds to organizations. In some cases, with research, having called up several broker agencies to find out what their skills were, what their mandates were, what kinds of problems and issues they were dealing with, I found out a couple of things. I guess in all I probably talked to a dozen different brokers personally.

What I found out is primarily that the JOTF is functioning as an employment agency at this point, which is good. We know we need more people working out there,

absolutely. However, I found out that there was very little money or time or skill being applied to the area of training, other than the pre-employment training like upgrading someone's computer skills etc to fit into a slot that was required.

I thought this a little risky for the enormous amounts of money and effort that are being put into this project to have long-term results. One of the ways we know we get long-term results with new hires is that we do invest in their training in terms of that specific job role and the future of the company.

In a general sense, I found that of the consultants, or what they call job developer people, who are dealing directly with the companies, about one in eight cases is concerned with training inside the company. I think there's a tremendous imbalance going on here, just from a personal point of view.

Getting back to my little document, which is a training assessment tool, they thought that it was a good thing and they could use it, but they didn't know particularly how or what at this point. Granted, it's a young organization.

I further found out, in my investigations of how JOTF is doing the job and what kinds of real training skills it's offering the general public as well as the corporations, that OSDO, the Ontario skills development office, had offered the JOTF body help at its onset, I guess last spring. I'm not sure of my timing here.

When they were initially developing themselves to go out and be training consultants out there, which is part of their mandate, they basically refused OSDO's help and said, "No, we're going to do it our way." Granted, they have a different kind of program, but OSDO has been functioning as training consultants in the business community for maybe 8 or 10 years. To refuse that kind of experience didn't make sense to me. At any rate, I had some concerns around that. Let me keep a closer eye on my time here.

Let's move on to some of the colleges and programs that are being run through the public educational bodies. One of the things we've seen happen in the community colleges out in the west end, Humber, Sheridan etc, is that in terms of training skills or being able to provide quality training programs, the community colleges consistently come to us. They say, "If we want to run a course on managing change, how do we do that?"

They come to private trainers because private trainers are essentially the leading edge of developing what business needs. All of those existing bodies within the educational institutions that do deliver training, even from the point of view of welding and forklift truck driving, have sourced the skills of private training to be able to do what they do.

There's a tremendous amount of concern, I guess as you've heard before, with the fact that recommendations are being made by JOTF that the public's subsidized training moneys are to be funnelled through the public institutions essentially. In short form, what that means to me is that in some sense we're being brokered out of business. There isn't a level playing field out there at this point in time, it seems, and by indications of how this will work,

it's going to get worse. I have read the proposed legislation, but the problem seems to exist mostly due to the very formation of the board itself. Training is represented exclusively by people from the education system.

1710

We not only feel there's a grave injustice being done to our business, but there's a grave injustice being done to the mandate itself when the people who are professionals, the people who know what training is, the people who provide training for public education or provide the trainers and the programs for the public institutions, are not seated on the board.

This seems to be a grave error of some kind, that the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board could not have a representative of the private training community. I mean, I was truly shocked when I found that out. How could that be? We are the history of training. We are the skills of training, and those skills exist other places, but they usually exist because we've been there first.

I've got a couple of minutes. How I personally feel about that is very threatened. My livelihood is at stake as a private trainer, and I've had a look at things like moving to the United States. I've had to look at things like changing careers, which I'm not about to do. I've spent too long and have too much invested in it, and I love my work. The truth is that I love my work and I wouldn't want to do anything else.

I'm really addressing you here today as an individual who's a private trainer and who sees some kinds of what I would call injustices and what I would call insincerities in terms of what OTAB is intended to do, which is to upgrade training for not only the unemployed but the employed, therefore to instil and inspire economic growth because we have better-trained people here. To ignore the very source and the very powerful skills and creativity and commitment that are in the private training sector I find baffling. That's all I really want to tell you, and it's just about me as a personal trainer. Hopefully I've stirred some questions or some comments you might like to make.

Mr Farnan: I suppose I would be remiss if I didn't start off by mentioning the debt we owe to the private trainers in the province of Ontario. I believe that as a group you've made a very, very significant contribution to this whole area.

What I'm at somewhat of a loss about is why you would think the establishment of a board and the emphasis this administration is placing on training, and also given the very strong commitment to partnership of the Premier and this government, why you wouldn't look upon this as a great opportunity for increasing a coordinated partnership, as opposed to, as you see it, being excluded.

Mr Bannerman: Would you just phrase that question in a sentence or two for me?

Mr Farnan: I have real difficulty with brevity, believe me, but let me try again.

Mrs Cunningham: What was that?

Mr Offer: Could you expand on that thought?

Mrs Cunningham: It's after 5. Be careful, Mike.

Mr Farnan: I can't help recalling my saying to a professor one time I didn't understand the question, and when he repeated it, I still didn't understand it. He then said, "The answer is either yes or no." I said, "Yes," and he said, "No, the answer is no." Anyway, let me try again.

Mr Bannerman: Okay, Mike. May I call you—

Mr Farnan: By all means, yes.

Mr Bannerman: Thank you. We are grateful for the amount of care and concern that's going into training initiatives, and OTAB is I believe basically making the right move. I like the idea that there's going to be a board that's going to administrate funds and is going to set some regulatory standards and is going to raise the consciousness, in general, of the power of training and what it can do for the economic growth of this province. I like that concept; I think it's good. We generally will support that.

What I am upset at and afraid of and shocked at is that we're not represented, or there is no indication that we will be represented on the local boards.

Mr Farnan: No. I would suggest to you that all of those people who have bought into your services and who appreciate your services and the expertise and quality of the service you provide are indeed members of OTAB, and because of that you are represented in a very significant way. Why would it not make good common sense for individuals who have hired your expertise in the past, who now have a more coordinated approach, who still recognize that expertise, to go in partnership in the delivery of service? I think it stands to reason that if you've had good experiences in the past, you will go back to the source. I don't think you guys should be concerned at all.

Mr Bannerman: Well, I'll tell you one brief story, okay, Mr Farnan?

Mr Farnan: One story deserves another.

Mr Bannerman: One simple story. We proposed to the Steelworkers union, fairly high up in the organization, that we offer some conflict management courses through their individual unions and individual companies. We'd set up some pilots; we'd try to run those programs; we'd get people who are in negotiation and who have to deal with conflict all the time working from the same set of skills, working from the same skill base, the same program. We'd teach management and labour together in the same course how to do that. "Wonderful idea. Great." They were very encouraged, very hopeful. Then out came a document some time last year in which the congress of labour said, in a general sense, "We support training being bought through the public institutions and not through private trainers."

Even though I had people in my course who said: "This is great stuff; we need more of this," when I went to those people to create a partnership that would absolutely give them a better edge in terms of coming to contract, in terms of solving some of their problems, because of the policy statement of labour at large, we couldn't take that possibility into—

Mr Farnan: My suggestion to you would be that you're always developing the better mousetrap, you're always developing the more effective course and the more effective

communication, and because you believe so dearly in the entrepreneurial system, you are ready to go out there and compete. I believe the public sector indeed will come to you. Given the very strong commitment of this administration to partnership between the public and private sectors, I believe your future is indeed secure.

Mr Ramsay: First of all, I'd like to apologize: I had to leave the room during your presentation. We have this all in transcript in Hansard, and I will go through it so I'll get that.

We've heard other private trainers—I don't know if you mentioned this—about having a say, having a seat, if you will, at the table. I think it's important that private trainers have a direct say and are able to contribute in a direct way rather than just through the reference group. I am certainly prepared to consider that in amendments that I would bring forward.

1720

In fact, as I was saying earlier, I think the model of the composition of the board is really based on a labour-management model; that is, basically two equal partners, and they go at it. It's almost set up, unfortunately, in an adversarial way. Then we have other partners who've been injected into this.

I think there's a way to keep the system driven by the clients, because I think it's got to be driven by the labour market partners and not by the providers of training. I think you need to be there so there's a two-way communication, so you can obviously contribute to what's going on but also hear what the concerns are. So there would be a way to make sure the power is retained by the customer—it should be client-driven—but still have you there by looking at how the voting mechanism would be distributed. You could have a double majority, plus maybe 50% or only 40% of the other group. You still keep the power, if you will, with the main partners, but at least it gets you at the table so you're contributing and know directly what's going on.

I'm looking at an amendment that would combine all that, so you'd be at the table but we don't destroy that balance of the other two partners having the main say.

Mr Bannerman: Thank you, Mr Ramsay. That is essentially the very essence of the whole issue, if you will. If there isn't representation on the OTAB board from the private training sector, then that condition filters all the way down through whatever else happens. In talking about the Jobs Ontario training fund, I have examples of that in my experience, of trying to do business or trying to create business or trying to build partnerships; because it's not coming from the very essence of the model itself, it doesn't happen in terms of applications in the real world.

Mr Ramsay: Right. Thank you.

Mr Bannerman: I'm very encouraged to hear that. Thank you.

Mr Offer: I have a question. First, thank you for your presentation. I must say I share in some of the concerns you have when you take a look at the legislation. I think one cannot help but conclude there has been a decision

made that may very well detrimentally affect private trainers in this province.

All you have to do is read the objects or part of the objects of this legislation, which speak to using "publicly funded" education systems. We have heard the concerns by the private trainers throughout this province that to date there has been a good working relationship: Each has found a certain niche, each is working within it. But OTAB seems to set a priority of one to the other, which is not in keeping with the effective use of training expertise in this province.

I don't necessarily have a question of you except to say that I believe some of the concerns you raised are well founded. I believe they are validated when one looks at the legislation itself. In a strange way, I don't think it bodes well for the future. I think we have a tremendous example of private trainers in all areas of the province who have identified needs in the community and have sought out ways in which those needs can be addressed.

I can certainly say that I agree with the comments and position of my colleague Mr Ramsay, and we'll be seeking to ensure that some of the concerns you have raised are indeed met by changing this legislation.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Bannerman, you are not alone in the observations you've made today. You should know that other institutions, such as the Toronto School of Business, different chambers of commerce, different associations of career colleges, the boards of trade and others have certainly brought forward your concern, but they've been very specific in what they want. I would suggest that you perhaps get in touch with the Toronto School of Business or someone else, take a look at its brief and then put to us in writing specifically how you'd like us to change this Ontario Training and Adjustment Board legislation. That would be my suggestion. Until you do that, I don't know specifically what you would like us to do.

Actually, in the two education seats on the OTAB board itself, under section 9—have you see this legislation?

Mr Bannerman: I've read this legislation.

Mrs Cunningham: If you take a look at it, it talks about two directors representing educators and trainers. In fact, I stand to be corrected: I'm sure you can answer this question or confirm one way or the other. It's my understanding that community colleges and community-based trainers have those seats, but I'm not sure.

Mr Bannerman: One is from the education board and one is from the community college system.

Mrs Cunningham: No. Community-based trainers are a different group of people. They wouldn't consider themselves private trainers.

Mr Bannerman: Both of those are not from the private training sector.

Mrs Cunningham: That's correct; that's why I'm concerned. But then you shouldn't be surprised, because this happens to be the direction the government seems to be moving in, although there have been major changes made within the last three or four days, so one never knows if we might have in fact some listening skills applied—

The Chair: Far be it from me to be critical.

Mrs Cunningham: I've been sitting listening all along, Mr Chairman. Mr Bannerman's come before us and said he's really scared as a private trainer. I'm just saying that private day care operators certainly got the message, and you should be nervous.

My suggestion to you is that you put it in writing; perhaps speak to the school of business and see if it's come up with even different ideas about how you can be represented both on the training board itself and on the individual boards throughout the communities. Thank you for coming.

Mr Bannerman: Thank you. We would specifically ask for two seats to be given to the private training sector. We would support that.

Mrs Cunningham: You have been ignored throughout the legislation. We will be putting forth amendments that will give you more strength throughout the bill, and we'll see how well the government members have listened to your concerns.

Mr Bannerman: I appreciate that. We never know about that until we see the results.

Mrs Cunningham: Anything can happen these days, Mr Bannerman.

Mr Bannerman: Yes, absolutely.

Mrs Cunningham: We've witnessed it in the last week. Who knows what might happen?

Mr Farnan: Mr Bannerman is much more trusting, Dianne.

Mrs Cunningham: But you gave specific encouragement to this gentleman in your line of questioning, and we'll be watching for your amendment.

The Chair: Mr Bannerman, the committee thanks you and your company, Performance Plus, very much for coming here today and sharing your views with us about this piece of legislation. It's important that you and others like you feel comfortable coming before this committee, and we're glad you took the time to do that. We trust you'll keep in touch with us as these events unfold. If you have anything more to say or any new views to share, I trust you'll pass them along.

Mr Bannerman: I only want to say that it is a pleasure to have this forum to be able to speak in and I really do appreciate that. I will forward a brief with some specific recommendations—

The Chair: To the clerk of the committee.

Mr Bannerman: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you kindly, sir. I want to thank the staff and the members of the committee for their cooperation. We're adjourned until 10 am tomorrow morning. Thank you.

The committee adjourned at 1727.

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Cunningham, Dianne (London North/-Nord PC) for Mr Jordan

Farnan, Mike (Cambridge ND) for Ms Murdock

Martin, Tony (Sault Ste Marie ND) for Mr Waters

Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway

Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Dadamo

Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Klopp

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Anderson, Anne, research officer, Legislative Research Service

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

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Second Intersession, 35th Parliament

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Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and
Adjustment Board Act, 1993

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième intersession, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 16 février 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre

Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Tuesday 16 February 1993

The committee met at 1006 in room 151.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND
ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993
LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL
ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET
D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 10:06. The bad weather has obviously delayed participants wanting to be here this morning. We will recess until 10:15.

The committee recessed at 1006 and resumed at 1017.

BRANT-HALDIMAND-NORFOLK
LOCAL TRAINING BOARD
STEERING COMMITTEE

The Chair: Good morning. Our first participant this morning is the Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk local training board process. If the people speaking on its behalf would please seat themselves, tell us who you are and what your title or position is with that committee or process, we've got 30 minutes. Please try to save the last 15 minutes for questions and dialogue. Go ahead, sir.

Mr John Douglas: I apologize for being late.

The Chair: No need for apologies.

Mr Douglas: Thank you very much. My name is John Douglas. I'm a local businessperson representing the Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk local training board steering committee. Our objective today is to make your committee aware of the facts relating to our community that will lead to your recommendation that Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk would benefit greatly from its own local training board, separate from Hamilton; right now it's put in with Hamilton.

The local training board process, in our view, must be community-driven. The community needs to make this thing happen over a number of years. It's a partnership, and partnerships or relationships take time to develop. The opening statement of the Skills to Meet the Challenge paper, which was released a number of years ago, states, "This new board will be an autonomous organization, bringing together those who can best identify and respond to training needs: business, labour, training providers and community/social action groups." Based on this statement, we believe that within our community are the people who can best and are most able to respond to the training needs.

I'd like to explain a few facts about our community. For three years now we've been working together on a partnership that would include all the people in our community who receive any kind of funding for any kind of training and those who would be in touch with the

clients in terms of their needs. We meet together three times a year and very openly discuss the needs in our community from a client base. We've also, in the last 18, 24 months, brought together business and labour to that table, where we discuss everything that needs to go on.

It has been my experience sitting on that board that it's a very open process in our community. We've been working together now with the Haldimand-Norfolk community, bringing the results of those two negotiations together. Every need in the community is discussed in a 20- to 30-page document we put together and circulated beforehand. Everybody gets a copy of that, and we come away, if not with some way in which someone can meet those needs, at least in most situations with a plan down the road that we can address: either some more government funding or in some way in the community, stir up a way to meet that need.

We're already three years down the road towards developing this partnership. The two committees we have are called the employment coordinating committees. The labour market needs of our two surveys are discussed, we gather all the training partners, we're bringing business on board as a vital partner to the people who can supply the jobs, and together we're identifying and meeting the training needs.

Traditionally, we have not done that on a Hamilton basis. We're separated in a number of ways from Hamilton geographically. We are different communities from Hamilton. We've gone through some restructuring in Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk where, over the last 10 years, from the early 1980s, we've seen our major employers walk away from us and leave us with a totally different industrial base. We've gone through that transition successfully. Everything's not smooth, with our latest recession, but we've already transformed our industrial framework from huge employers to small, diverse businesspeople. If you look in our chamber of commerce handbook, you'll see very few employers with 200 or 300 or 400 people, maybe six or seven, and you'll see hundreds numbering in the range from 30 to 150 or 200 employees.

Hamilton has yet to go through some major changes, and we're aware of that. We've seen in the last couple of weeks that the large steelmakers are going to have some massive needs, and part of that transition, we believe, is going to overwhelm the needs of smaller communities like Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk. We respect each other's communities, but we are totally different. On various levels, the government has already recognized the closeness of these two areas, Brant-Haldimand and Norfolk. We share certain health councils and different things like that, and geographically we're very close, and also we're very much the same in our base. Some of the factors that came into deciding where the local training boards would go—the working age population, travelling to work, the general

conditions that were looked at—are very similar in Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk.

We also have one unique component that is very different from Hamilton: The agricultural component represents 46% of our total workforce. That's not something we have to just put aside. The agricultural part—the farmers, the small business people—represent a significant amount of training dollars that come on board, and they're sitting on all our committees, and we're working together. They're vital to our local economy. With Hamilton, that is almost non-existent, apart from a few areas around the Hamilton area. So that's an area where they feel they'll be very easily disfranchised if we don't have some kind of partnership that keeps us together.

The fourth thing is that we have been recognized by various levels of government, as I said before. We've been recognized by the federal government for a Futures program. Hamilton doesn't have a Futures program. The Futures program was set up historically for communities that have unique needs. Both Brant-Haldimand and Norfolk have community Futures committees. So there has been a need there over the last eight to nine years, and that is continuing.

The other point I'll raise here is that during the local training board consultations last May in Hamilton, there was absolutely unanimous agreement—from Hamilton, from all our partners, the various agents we represent—for a separate training board for Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk. There was not one voice that was dissenting among all the people, and actually it was quite a rousing support. In both communities, we really believe it would be best for both communities.

We're not asking for something that's unreasonable. If Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk were to separate, we'd still be 14th out of 24 boards in terms of size. We're representing about 180,000 employed people, and for a lot of the outlying areas of Ontario, that's still a very large board.

We already do our labour market surveys together. We're already participating in terms of determining those needs and analysing them together because the similarities that come up in them are almost incredible. We already do our training fairs together, where all the labour organizations, the business organizations, the private trainers and social action groups are together at that training fair, both clients and those who can supply the needs of clients.

We have a natural community college catchment area. We're already designated by the people who make those boundaries; Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk is already in that catchment area.

One of the things that probably would be the deciding factor for your decision is that Environment Canada has already naturally grouped us together. If you listened to the weather report this morning, it's already Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk. So we have a geographic link there; we have the exact same weather. So if we're going to meet there on certain days, we'll all be travelling in the same weather. We won't have to travel in weather like this.

Finally, we ask you to weigh our proposal for a truly local board. One of the things that has really come to the point is that this process has been carried on for the last 18

months. I was reading my document in our proposal, and it was dated February 14, 1992. This is really dragging on. We need some movement on this thing. We've been desperately trying to get some hope for our volunteers that we're going to decide this boundary issue and get on with it. We don't care what we do; let's get on with it and do what we're going to do.

In order to get volunteers involved, it has to be local. The thought of having to travel 40 or 50 miles to another community to share its expertise—and we really believe that this process is going to be run on the backs of the volunteers. This government and the federal government cannot afford the expertise that's in our communities in terms of training; you couldn't buy it unless you won the Wintario. We really can't afford to disfranchise all those volunteers, so we have to make it as truly practical as possible. Even coming in here this morning is an incredible difficulty, getting into a place like this in Toronto, away from our community. It's a day's work to come for a half-hour meeting. It takes a whole day, and that can't happen at the local level. It will not be a local board.

Again, to use the words of our minister, Richard Allen, we are looking forward, with the rest of the province, to this government sharing its leadership in rebuilding the economy of the province, starting with a truly community-based solution. It has to be community-driven and it has to be local.

We'd appreciate your support in supporting us and giving us a local training board in the Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk area.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Welcome, John. I'm very much aware of your situation in Brantford. It was one of the first areas I travelled into to get myself up to speed in regard to all the skills training. Brantford really stood out, because it was a very good example of how the community had come together and worked together.

The first message I received on my trip down there was that in order for a group to be effective, there had to be a community of interest within the group, that you couldn't impose this from the outside. That's really the main point you're making. What concerns me very much about this legislation, as a legislator, is that I don't have much control over this, because basically what we have here is a bare-bones document in Bill 96. In fact, it just gives discretionary power to OTAB to establish these local boards. It's not even mandated now. The reason for that is that there are other partners involved, as you know.

It really much concerns me that this will be done without acknowledging that community of interest and the groundwork that people such as you have already done, because that's important. You have something there that's alive and vital and is effective; it's working very well. We've got to find a way.

I'm a bit frustrated, because it's not in the legislation—I'm going to try to get it in the legislation—to give the importance to the local boards. I'm not sure the top organization is all that important, quite frankly. We seem to be working with this top-down structure. I think where the work's going to be happening is in what people like you do.

You've already done that, because you hit a crisis in Brantford quite a few years ago. You've had an incredible transition that the rest of the province now is catching up on, from the manufacturing of agricultural goods to moving now into higher-value, high-tech types of goods. You've been there already. We could learn from your experience, because you've done it. I'm glad you're here to reinforce that point, because it's people like you in the field who are going to do it.

Mr Douglas: I think the point that was mentioned in there is that it has been strong, but there's a fragile nature to it because the cynicism is building. This is 18 months, 24 months of promises, promises. Our biggest problem is getting businesspeople. The businesspeople and the labour people—it's not an easy relationship. We're sitting down together and we're talking, but we're not going to stay there for ever waiting for leadership. We need some clear leadership.

I'm not so concerned at this point that it really matters how definite that document is. I know there are some real arguments we could get into about that, but we need some leadership in terms of training. We've got to be globally competitive. Apart from that, it's all a waste of time. It's not going to do labour any good; it's not going to do business any good.

We're sensing some cynicism from our people. It's our volunteers, and we can't value them enough, because it's not going to be driven by bureaucrats and it's not going to be driven by staff people, as the document shows; there's going to be very little money for that. So we have to ride on this one very quickly, get moving on it and show some clear leadership in terms of the direction we want to take for Ontario.

Mr Ramsay: Your LTAB is the quintessential example, I believe, of the problems that could develop. If we now amalgamate your group with Hamilton, on both the labour side and the management side, their big problem of course is the steel industry. We all know in this room what's happening with the steel industry. That's going to be their big concern, and naturally so.

Mr Douglas: It should be.

Mr Ramsay: Their first priority is going to be how to stop the hemorrhaging of jobs in the steel industry. That's going to be their big concern. They have more population than you do and they're going to outweigh your say on that thing. All that work you've been doing and your concerns for your area are going to be put aside, because if you amalgamate the two groups in that particular area, the big crisis now will be what's happening in Hamilton. You've started to work on your crisis. You're now starting to manage it and starting to build. So I think you need to be left alone to do your work.

Mr Douglas: That's what we're here for.

Mr Ramsay: We've been saying this consistently. Again, I just thank you for bringing that, because we're really here to listen. I just hope the government members hear that. Here's a genuine example of a group of people who would like to continue what they're doing and,

quite frankly, be left alone by Queen's Park and let them continue their work.

1030

Mr Douglas: Because the government members are here, I'll make just one more point. I think one of the saddest things that happened was that we had a group of people in this province who were sitting down ready to move into local training boards. We told all our people, businesspeople, labour people, that this is where the power was going to happen, that this is where change was going to take place. We had these people all sitting down talking about structure, and in the middle of that, we dropped Jobs Ontario on social service agencies. They got the message loud and clear: "To hell with you."

We know where the power really is going to lie; that is, where the money goes. I think the best thing that could have happened in this province is if we'd taken Jobs Ontario, changed it a little bit and put it into the hands of the local training board and used it as a transition body for three years. It would have worked beautifully, because we would have been forced to work on an upfront critical issue, learned to work together and then come into some kind of structure. Now we're bringing a structure—the Jobs Ontario message is coming out loud and clear, that they're positioning themselves to be the local training board. You go anywhere in this province and it's the biggest problem that's coming down here.

So be very careful on that one. Make sure the government's very clear on where Jobs Ontario is going. It was a three-year program. We had the CITCs, community industrial training committees, in this province told they could not have Jobs Ontario brokers because they weren't going to exist. You were telling businesspeople that they were going to be out of this province in three years. That's a terrible statement to make.

We've tried in our own community. Why don't the Jobs Ontario people sit down with our local training board? We'll transition before the government shows us leadership and we'll already be up and running. We have a 400-page document already together from all the groups with all their strategy plans for the next three years. We're doing it already. We have to be very careful that we show leadership and don't take everybody down one path and then put all the money down another path, because the message was loud and clear and we got it real clear. I think we've dropped off a lot of support as a result of that.

It may sound good for jobs. The reality of the situation is that you need business on board in order to give jobs, and right now it's only social service agencies. There already are existing networks in place to get those things. Let's use them: Let's not throw them aside, because they have a lot of expertise.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): Let's assume that the government is listening and recognizes and understands that Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk constitutes a distinct centre for training purposes.

Mr Douglas: I thought you were going to say "distinct society."

Mr McGuinty: I want to broach a different topic, another problem which is going to arise. Almost half of the workforce works in the agricultural sector. How are those people going to have representation, given the directors and the representative groups that are going to be on the LTAB?

Mr Douglas: There are about three organizations already in the province—I don't know all the names; the Ontario Federation of Agriculture—and they are represented. That is not all people working in the farm fields. There are the fruit growers, huge in Haldimand-Norfolk. They have an association, they bring in a lot of migrant workers for that, but they also have a large base. There's also a huge canning area and processing. They're represented by their unions in a large degree, but there are also associations.

Unfortunately, I wish I could answer that question in real clear terms. It's going to take a partnership and it's going to work together. We've already had negotiations with them. They already have some of their own stuff running, but they're sitting on every one of our boards and they're showing excellent participation.

That's just some of the partnership and the relationship we're going to have to work with. That's a figure that popped out in the middle of this process. Everybody gasps when they hear it, but that's the reality of the situation. A lot of those people supplement their income. They would be listed as agricultural employees, but they probably work in some kind of industry in the off-season and also a lot are self-employed in small businesses.

Just to give you an idea, there are 11 boards of trade in the Haldimand-Norfolk area and one chamber of commerce in Brantford. We're represented by six school boards—an incredible number of people. It's not going to be easy. I didn't say it was going to be easy, but it's going to be even more difficult if we have to get lumped in with Hamilton. They're just going to throw up their hands and walk away and say, "Look, I'm never going to be heard."

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I just wanted to ask you a couple of questions. One is related to the issue of your very strong position of having a local training board for Brant, Haldimand and Norfolk. We've certainly heard that before. We've had a number of groups come before us who have expressed just as strongly and as passionately as you have that position.

You also mentioned, though, in your presentation or in the response to a question, that we all need to be getting our act together so that we can get into this global economy and compete in a way that's going to provide some opportunity for success. Underlying this piece of legislation is the principle that we need to drop the old barriers, that they get in the way of us working together and doing things. It seems to me that in this instance perhaps an old barrier may in fact get in the way of that whole area getting its act together in a way that perhaps might be more competitive.

I just look at my own area. I'm from Sault Ste Marie. We're steel industry-based and we're beginning to realize now that if we're going to be successful into the future,

we're going to have to work with our neighbours, north and east. Is there no sense of perhaps what you're proposing here, continuing to promote the small group as opposed to the larger entity?

Mr Douglas: If I can restate your question, are you saying there's no benefit from being with Hamilton?

Mr Martin: Yes.

Mr Douglas: I think there is some benefit being with Hamilton. We recognize that. We already work very closely. I'm involved with the community industrial training committee movement and there's a couple of other people and they're working very closely with Hamilton. But in the sense of the imminent problems that we see them having right now and the struggles they're going to have to go through, we wonder whether we're just going to be dwarfed by that. I'm not saying that down the road we're not going to learn an incredible lot from their process, and we probably have a lot to show them in terms of the small business base we've developed, but just in terms of the way the local training board and the structures are going to go up, to add that many more relationships to something we believe is really critical right now just may not be productive. It may be great, but it may not work.

Mr Martin: It seems to me that if you're not part of the process of Hamilton's restructuring, which will affect you in significant ways whether you are or not, it will be a loss for you.

The other thing I wanted to comment on—I just can't let it go by—is the Jobs Ontario experience. In our community it has been a very positive, excellent one where the broker has been able to go out and work with the business community and with those who are in need of jobs and put them together. The key there was flexibility. The key was dropping the old barriers that often got in the way of that kind of thing happening. Is there no way in your instance here again, I guess, that you might see a need, as we look into the future and the global economy that's coming at us, to drop those barriers and begin to make some of these things work that obviously have tremendous potential?

Mr Douglas: I think the answer to that question is that yes, we'd be prepared to do that. We are working on that. The bottom line is that we're not sitting on the management board and we've been denied that seat. Without sitting on some kind of management board where you make policy, that's pretty difficult to do. The message we're getting loud and clear in the business and the labour community is that it's a social action group, it's client-based and, "Yes, we want you involved at a certain level." But we've always been involved together working at the decision-making level, and to be relegated to the other level is very difficult to work. We're doing everything we can. We believe we can help them be very successful and we've presented a number of documents to them that bring together proposals. Yes, we're working together; it just could be so much better.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Thank you, Mr Douglas, for your presentation. You argued very strongly for the community boards, which we think

are going to have a very important part to play in the overall program that OTAB represents.

Before I ask you for just a few comments about OTAB, how you think the provincial structure will work, I want to say we recognize the need for the community involvement. You argue it so strongly that I got a bit concerned it would become too insular almost. The other thing is to wonder why it's not working now. In other words, if the local communities know their interests so well, then why haven't we got better training programs in place now?

I heard Mr Ramsay saying so easily what the interests of Hamilton are that you'd think he was a representative for Hamilton, but in fact he's from northern Ontario. If he knows Hamilton's interests so well, then why can't these decisions all be made at a provincial body and never mind the local thing?

What we're trying to do is set up so you get the best of both; that is, the deeply rooted community participation and the overall provincial role as well, because we are, as everyone is admitting, in a global economy. How do you know what the circumstances in a global economy are except from a larger or greater perspective that the province, and ultimately the country, represents? Again, how you combine these interests is what we're after, and what we're trying to do is be as representative as possible, which brings me back to OTAB. I'd like some comments from you on what you think about the representation we've gotten.

1040

Mr Douglas: I think for the OTAB governing body that's essential, or the Canadian—I don't remember all the names. The national body is very important because it can look at things from a national and international perspective. Ontario, being the engine of Canada, it's very important that we protect that interest.

Coming down to the local level, if I can just give you a real quick rundown, just an example, we sit around a training board and somebody will say—and this is what's happened in the past and we really appreciate some of the changes that have happened. The open tendering process has been fantastic because basically we can sit down now and have competition. The community colleges have to pull up their socks because they have to now compete.

Just to give you an example, somebody will say, "Oh, we need to train." The CEC will sit down: "We've got a quarter of a million dollars, and we want to train 20 machinists." Well, that may be fine in certain other communities. In Brantford a year ago, we said, "The first thing we do is go out to the business community, stir them up and ask if we have any people who will hire 20 apprentices or 20 trainees. If we don't get that, we don't train," because the reality is, that's actual competition. That's a real job that's going to pay real taxes that's going to benefit Ontario.

The suggestion was that we needed not machinists but millwrights. So we went out and surveyed the business community, and this is where it really happens in terms of the community. There was a need. There were all kinds of people on UI, and the government had just kicked down their UI chargeback dollars, so it had to be UI recipients,

which was a change for us in the community. Usually the CEC handled that. We went out to the businesses and said, "Now, what kind of people do you need to employ?" It was really interesting. Very few of them were hard skills; 85% of them were soft skills: "I need people who know how to make a presentation. I need people who know how to talk on their feet. I need people who know some computer skills, not computer-literate but some computer skills."

We designed a program and put 17 of 19 people in actual apprenticeship programs after 36 weeks. So that's where it really happens. You can't dictate that from a province, because in three years—

Mr Gary Wilson: I guess I just want to say that that's part of the reason you have the two working together: that kind of experience can then be shared with other boards around the province.

Mr Douglas: Sure. What's interesting, we're already doing that now. We may have a need for four or five people but we can't run the program. Well, we'll immediately call Hamilton. We'll immediately call Toronto or Waterloo, because we're in a very good geographic area, and we'll buy four seats on a program that Hamilton's running, we'll buy four seats on a Cambridge program; we're not going to duplicate the process. So there is that going on in the various communities, there is that kind of partnership going on, and it can be more, I think, just with better communication. But the true spirit of the local board is to find out what that community needs.

It may be really important in the other 40 communities across the province that they need tool and die makers. Well, we may not have any jobs for them. It would be very foolish for us to hire people and send them to other communities. We have done a lot of that, but we should really be looking after our own local needs, but in the context of the bigger picture.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, I want to remind you that how "local" is defined is changing.

The Chair: Thank you. We've got to move on to Mr Farnan, and we're going to.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): Thank you, Mr Chair. I simply want to commend you for your presentation and the enthusiasm with which you made the presentation. I've worked very closely with the CITC in Cambridge, and I'm familiar with some of the work you do as a neighbouring organization.

One of the problems, and I put it to you, is that this legislation is a compromise. When I hear the opposition members—and I've only sat here for a day now—every delegation that comes in is going to have an amendment to have another member placed on the board. Now, there isn't going to be a room big enough for the board that will be constructed by the opposition members. That's one of the problems.

But I think what is critical is that we tap into the energies, the expertise and resources, and I have absolutely no doubt that people like yourself and people like my friends in Cambridge who have been involved with the CITCs are going to be an integral part of this process, because once you're interested, once you're committed, you're going to

find ways to make this work. This is a partnership. We've got to work together to make this fly. The future of our province, our industrial future, is at stake. We need you and we need your colleagues to support this legislation constructively.

The last point I would make is that within the legislation there is the reality that the local boards will reflect their local communities. When I hear Mr Ramsay say, "Well, the Steelworkers will make decisions for an agricultural sector," this is crass politics being played out at a committee table. We should be working constructively, and obviously if there is an agricultural base, that must be reflected in the board. If there's an industrial base, that must be reflected in the board. I would just simply appeal to members on all sides to be constructive. I really appreciate the presentation you made today.

Mr Douglas: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Farnan. Mr Turnbull, please.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): First of all, I'd like to say, Mr Douglas, I regret that my colleague and I arrived late. We missed your presentation. It wasn't because of lack of interest. The things you've said since we've arrived make good sense, and indeed we know of the excellent work that your organization has done.

Just to ride briefly on Mr Farnan's comment, most groups that have come here have been talking about the need for a different composition of the board. Mr Farnan would suggest that we want to see an enormous board. I don't think that would be very productive because I think we all know that there's less achieved the larger the meeting, whatever it happens to be.

But my question to you briefly is, is the current composition of the board—I'm not talking about the size of the board, but the composition of the board—appropriate, or would a tripartite approach with equal representation from labour, business and educators be appropriate?

Mr Douglas: I personally don't think there's a real lot of problem in terms of composition of the board. That sounds great till you sit down and try to put people in place.

We have tried to work through this thing. We've heard very few details, you must understand, but we've tried to figure out—the best people that you need to have on this board are already busy. To ask them to be available one day out of five—we've heard some other numbers, but whatever the numbers are—we have difficulty getting them out for a couple of hours' meeting in terms of community planning right now. So I think there's going to have to be a recognition there that this is really valuable. It's never going to please anybody.

I think the composition is there. I think the major players in terms of business and labour—I think the social action groups are very quick to be there, and in our community they've got their work done. They're well informed of their community and they are there waiting to go. Nobody is ever always going to be happy. We also have a large aboriginal component in our community and they have their own board and we're working together with that. But

the business and labour are going to be the toughest ones to sit down at the table. The numbers that are represented there—yes, it's going to be a fight, there's no doubt about it, getting that down, but we have to get past that and get some leadership. I think probably the biggest difficulty is that we're living in the lack of a decision, and it's a good decision late or a bad decision early. Which is better, I don't know. I think we need some decision on this board and get on with it and let's find out how much of a mess it is and sort it out. We will. We always do. We're Canadians.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Douglas. The committee thanks you and your colleagues from the local training board process in Brant-Haldimand-Norfolk. We're grateful to you for your interest and your work on this matter. Please express that gratitude to those people when you get back home. We trust that you'll keep in touch if you have any more views or insights that you want to share with us. Have a safe trip back.

Mr Douglas: Thank you very much. We'll be submitting a paper. Thank you very much for your time.

BOARD OF TRADE OF METROPOLITAN TORONTO

The Chair: The next participant is the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto. Would those people please come forward, have a seat, and tell us their names and titles or positions if they wish. We've got their written submission, which is becoming an exhibit by virtue of being filed and will form part of the record. Go ahead, sir.

Mr Bruce McKelvey: Thank you very much, Mr Chair. My name is Bruce McKelvey. I'm a member of council for the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto. I also chair the education committee that we have. We have about 25 individuals, volunteers, who sit on an education committee and have been doing so for some 20 years, I might add. It's our responsibility within the board to respond on matters relating to education and training.

I'm also a member of what they call the business steering committee, which has been active in the formulation of the OTAB governing body. We act there, the board, as probably the only community-based organization that is participating in that. We have a membership of 12,000 members here in the greater Metropolitan area and are of course an independent, non-profit organization, matters relating to education and training.

I'm also a member of what they call the business steering committee, which has been active in the formulation of the OTAB governing body. We act there, the board, as probably the only community-based organization that is participating in that. We have a membership of 12,000 members here in the greater Metropolitan area and are of course an independent, non-profit organization.

Over the past 12 to 18 months we've certainly been very active in terms of consultation with many constituencies, meeting with the minister, the staff of Skills Development or the OTAB project team, as they're called, and we also have had representation on the local board consultation. I'd like to say just at the outset that I certainly support many of the themes relative to local boards that the speaker previous to me made so well.

I think in our comments this morning we'd like to go back to the genesis of the OTAB discussion, and we recall and we support very clearly the first document that came out. In the executive summary, it talked about how the fundamental principle on which OTAB is founded was going to be to improve Ontario's ability to compete successfully in the global arena by improving the skills of Ontario's workforce. We commend the government and we support that position.

However, I think it's fair to say that as we've been involved in the process which has led up to the drafting of the legislation, we have seen a compromise or an evolution of that fundamental principle, and it's an evolution that we are concerned about. We'd like to argue strongly that we get back on track and start to refocus around the prime economic objectives that the original principle spelled out in the green paper. We're going to propose some specific amendments to the legislation, which we think would help in that process.

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The themes of market-driven and client- and learner-centred have been used, and I don't think they're overused; I think they're very appropriate here. I think it reflects the fact that the strength of the training process is going to come from the community and from the individual. We need to have an equitable partnership led by business and labour, and it needs to be affirmed in structure and process, and we need to have a system which encourages, measures and rewards innovation, efficiency and effectiveness. But if these are the things that we want, there are a number of amendments which must be made to support these primary objectives.

The first one I'd like to draw your attention to—and sometimes if you take these things one at a time, you say, "Well, you're arguing against motherhood." At the very end of the negotiation, and it really was a negotiation between some of the parties relative to the legislative document that came out—on the one hand, I think the government's to be commended for creating the environment which allowed the consultation between the different groups and put us in touch, one with the other, around the table. That was a very positive experience, but the legislation should reflect the true purpose and shouldn't waver from the fundamental objectives of what we want to see training doing here in Ontario.

I will tell you very clearly that the last-minute add-ons of phrases such as "improve the lives of all workers and potential workers" are additions which in our view don't necessarily stay on track with creating a more competitive economy through advanced training and adjustment processes in the province. We did notice that throughout the legislation we started to compromise the wording and the themes, and it became much more a piece of social legislation than economic and training-oriented legislation. We caution people, because with a vague and unfocused section such as this, we think that the purpose will be lost altogether.

If we increase the focus on the economy, this will not in any way be detrimental to the government's aims and indeed business's support of certain very desirable aspects

of social policy. They will come about. These policies won't be diluted, and I think in fact they will easily be enhanced, because if there's first and foremost a recognition that through economic success—and part of that economic success involves, and as business people we know this, bringing marginalized groups into the labour force—social policy can be put forward, this will be a very good thing for Ontario. But if we start to lose track of the main theme for training in this province, we will be doing ourselves and the people we serve a disservice.

With regard to that in terms of a specific recommendation, we argue strongly that the phrase "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" should be removed from clause 1(b) and paragraph 4(1)5, so we make that specific recommendation.

Somewhat along the same lines, we believe there needs to be continuing attention that the private sector is going to be the engine of renewal in Ontario's economy and, although there may be a restructuring of the public sector going on within this province, this restructuring effort, and indeed the resources to support any restructuring of government for the public sector, should not in any way interfere with the availability of training and adjustments to those in need in the private sector.

The focus in the act of the private sector is not clear, and in fact the inclusion of the public sector in paragraph 4(1)1 is misleading and I think sets an unrealistic level of expectation. We would like to make the second recommendation that the reference to public sector training should be excluded. Instead the act should offer a stronger mandate to training towards the private sector.

In terms of local boards—and I'll preface this by saying we've had consultations already with some of the staff who would try and appease us and say, "This is just a piece of legislation, we can't deal with the local boards now because that's a joint process, the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, the federal government, blah, blah, blah." We don't buy that for a second.

You absolutely can strengthen the legislation in regard to enshrining the empowerment of the local board, and you should do that. It is the involvement of local people and decision-making at the local level, combined with accessibility and responsiveness that the training service provided, which stimulates a personal and collective belief, commitment and action towards workplace training. The whole concept of OTAB and its eventual success will be dependent on how local programs are delivered, and there's a number of things that can go and support this.

First of all, we need to ensure that the resources supporting these training initiatives in Ontario are oriented towards the local boards, not to a centralized bureaucratic structure called OTAB. More specifically, I'm talking about the 700 civil servants who have been given, basically, what amount to job guarantees through this process coming in from different ministries.

To the extent that they have been given these job guarantees, we would argue very, very strongly that these individuals be placed as resources to the local boards, not to a centralized OTAB organization which will then, just by dint of the numbers of people, create a structure which is

not at all conducive to some of the very fundamental things that my colleague spoke to me about previously.

I'd also like to speak to Mr Farnan's point. We have not been told that the local board constitution will reflect the community. In fact when we have spoken to government officials and sought assurances that the local board composition will truly reflect the community; when we've asked whether or not the eight, eight, four and two is really going to be what's happening there; when we've asked whether or not groups from the outside, whether they be in agriculture or represent non-unionized labour, were going to be able to participate, we've been told no by the previous minister. If the current minister wants to make a clarification on that, we would certainly welcome it, but that's certainly not where he's on record.

The relationship between OTAB and the local boards is one of reciprocal obligations and I think that's something, from the Board of Trade's perspective, we feel strongly about. OTAB should provide a policy environment and communications framework within which the local boards work. These local boards are going to be taking on a different life and I think—I haven't heard it today—but I'm sure you've heard some of the discussions relative to whether the local boards represent geographical orientation or what I would call a sectoral orientation.

These are going to be difficult problems to solve but, once again, like my colleague before us said, if we work within the right framework of empowered local boards without a strong bureaucratic OTAB, we'll get to the right solutions and we'll get to them much more quickly.

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They're complementary structures, the local boards, and they are going to be responsive to local conditions. It does get right down to whether or not you need 20 millwrights, 20 office technicians or 20 steelworkers. I can tell you, gentlemen and ladies, that determination is not going to be made sitting here in Queen's Park or in Toronto; that is going to be made with not only the input but the commitment of the people in that local community who want to create jobs and create wealth in their economy which will allow them all to have better lives. That will happen if we let them. We recommend that legislation be amended to enshrine local boards and the empowerment of them and to give direction in terms of staff resources going towards the local board effort.

The third area I'd like to comment on is that we believe all training providers must be treated equally by the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. The current legislation does not reflect this. In essence it creates a two-tier training delivery system which is not consumer-driven. It is important to make use of existing education facilities to reduce unnecessary overlap and inefficiency in services provided by the public system but, as the act reads now in paragraphs 4(1)15 and 4(1)16, there is an imbalance between the weight given to the private and publicly funded systems. It is important that the freedom to select the training provider which best meets the needs of the client, be it a public, private or community-based provider, be enshrined in the legislation. This freedom to choose is

essential and is a positive factor in improving the quality and efficiency of Ontario's training system.

In our view, private trainers will continue to provide a much-needed stimulus to bring about innovation and efficiency which will benefit all training providers in the system in general. Competition among training providers must be retained as a hallmark of Ontario's restructured, market-driven, labour force development system. Therefore, we specifically recommend that the act should include, as one of its objectives under section 4, the client's right to choose training based on his or her determination of quality of service and that we do not create a two-tier system.

A most noticeable oversight in the act still is the lack of representation of non-unionized and self-employed workers and the overrepresentation of the OFL on the OTAB advisory council. I say this notwithstanding the fact that we're having very good dialogue between business and labour at one level, probably better dialogue than we've had in many other situations, but it is not inclusive dialogue, it is not full dialogue.

Less than 20% of the business and industry workforce in Ontario is unionized. What about the other 80% of workers who are either represented by associations or organizations or are not part of a union? I think I would have argued more strongly, had I been sitting in my colleague's seat, about the agricultural workers. I think they're underrepresented. I would certainly argue very strongly on behalf of people like professional engineers and data processing professionals. These are the professions and the people and the companies that are going to provide the engine for Ontario's economic renewal. How can we not have them included at the main table within the OTAB structure?

It's critical that a mechanism be enshrined to include members of the worker, employer and self-employed constituencies that are not identified or affiliated with identifiable groups. We would ask that consideration be given to change in this area.

The fifth point I'm making is a somewhat more minor one, I suppose, but we'd like to put it forward. In section 21 there's a reference to fees fixed by regulations. We believe that in terms of setting fees in regulations this is not really the appropriate place to do it. Our contention is that the training and adjustment system will benefit those in need best if the process is market-driven. By definition, there has to be the ability to make changes in the short term. We don't see any particular reason or rationale in having fees fixed in regulations.

In summary, the board of trade has some serious concerns about the long-term effectiveness of this act. We don't want it to be a mile wide and an inch deep. We need more focus under the purpose clause to prevent any future confusion and indeed lack of movement within the council. If the partners have a clear and agreed-upon vision of why they're making certain decisions, their energy will be well employed. So with a clear and economic market focus, both economic and social objectives will be achieved.

Local boards must be given the autonomy and authority to work locally and independently, and they must be given the resources. Here I'm talking about those 700 civil

servants. There should be a one-tier training system which is consumer-driven, representation within the structure must include non-unionized and self-employed workers, and the section on fees being fixed by regulations should be eliminated. I thank you for your time.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Turnbull, three minutes, please.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you very much. I'll try to be brief so I can get a few questions in.

On this question of representation on the board, we had a presentation yesterday from somebody in the construction industry and he suggested that from the business side of the equation, he would suggest that the board be expanded, that business have nine seats and that manufacturing, construction and service industries share an equal number of seats.

Based upon what you have said, perhaps a further classification—let us call it data and technology—might be introduced as a fourth. Could you comment on that and just expand on your comments about representation of those people who are not covered by the OFL; in other words, the one seat that they've got at the moment.

Mr McKelvey: I think the most important aspect at the primary level is those people who are not—right now, if you don't belong to an identifiable group you are not in the game, and there are certainly some people being excluded. I'm not sure the answer is to expand the number of seats. I think the view the board has is that from an employee perspective, there is far too much weight being given specifically to the OFL. The OFL is not the only representative of employees in Ontario. So we would argue strongly that an adjustment be made, not necessarily to increase the number of seats but at the employee level make it more inclusive.

Mr Turnbull: From the point of view that it is easy to identify representatives from OFL as representatives, whereas from the rest of non-unionized labour it is probably somewhat more difficult to identify those people who should sit on it, how would you approach that?

Mr McKelvey: The consultation processes that we have all been involved in have been very fruitful within the education and training community. Although they felt at the outset that they could not accommodate themselves within two seats, they were able to do that based on that consultation process. It brought the universities, colleges, private trainers, community trainers and school boards together and they were able to sort some of these out. We would argue, I think, for a forum whereby representatives of the OFL, other representatives of unions and other employees' representatives have a similar forum, and in among them we believe that they would be successful in getting a broader representation.

Mr Farnan: I want to thank you for a very thoughtful presentation. I believe your presentation reflects very clearly the thinking of our Premier and the government that the best social legislation is the creation of jobs, and critical to that is having a highly skilled workforce. Secondly, I think the thinking would incorporate the idea of partnerships between the private and public sectors.

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My sense, Bruce, when I read the legislation, is that overall the emphasis is on training, skills, economics. I would agree with you that there is the phrase there which you have defined as "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers." It doesn't upset me. I think if you give workers skills, if you give them the opportunity for training, you give them a greater sense of security and no doubt the lives of workers will improve as a result of this kind of approach.

What really disturbed me, though, were your comments vis-à-vis the minister, where you suggested that the minister was on record as indicating that local boards would not reflect local communities. Nowhere have I found on record the minister ever making such a statement. If you have evidence of that, certainly I'd like to hear it.

On the contrary, the minister and the deputy minister have on numerous occasions—and I will use the words they themselves used—have said that we're not using the cookie cutter approach. Different boards in different areas will reflect different realities. It stands to reason, and I think a very reasonable approach would be that obviously, in agricultural communities, one wouldn't expect an industrial bias in terms of a board. If you have some information that I don't have, I'd appreciate your sharing it with the committee.

Mr McKelvey: I have two comments. First of all, at your top line you talked about jobs, and jobs indeed are a good thing. There's a line above that you didn't mention, and that's the creation of wealth and competitiveness within the world economy. If you don't have the ability to compete and create wealth, you won't get the jobs. I would argue that we would include a line above the one you spoke to.

Mr Farnan: And the Premier would agree with you.

Mr McKelvey: Good. With regard to your second comment, in terms of local boards, rather than get into the specifics of the meeting at this point in time, this process would benefit greatly from some specific clarity around the freedom within the local board structure, as the government sees it, as it would enter into it as one of three parties in terms of talking about the empowerment of local boards, the resources that would be there and the fact that their composition would not necessarily reflect the 8, 8, 4 and 2 model, and that from an employee perspective, where there were not employees in a unionized environment, there would not be a requirement for there to be a dominant union participation. The problem will be solved, perhaps more positively, with that clarification, which the board of trade would embrace.

Mr Ramsay: Mr McKelvey, thank you very much for your very thoughtful presentation. I think it really highlighted many of the points that need to be brought out.

I think you're being too kind when you talk about the purpose clauses. It's a collection of mealy-mouthed weasel words that's trying to appease everybody. You're right. It's not firm enough, it's not tough enough, it's not—

The Chair: I don't think the Alberta Speaker would allow that, but this is Ontario.

Mr Ramsay:—specific enough. It's really got to be, I think, very explicit that the purpose of this legislation is to create the most highly skilled workers in the world, who can compete with workers in the rest of the world so that we get Ontario back to redesigning and reinventing, if you will, our economy, because we have to build it up from scratch.

I think you're right. Consultation's great, and now what we've started to do is to compromise the basic, I think, drive and focus—the word you used—to try to appease everybody, all those partners out there, and because of that I'm not sure it's going to be successful.

Mr McKelvey: My experience is that you have to make the main thing the main thing and everybody has to understand what the main thing is.

Mr Ramsay: Yes, that's a very good point. I think maybe the answer might be here, and my colleague Steven Offer actually had suggested it: Maybe what we need to do is get some of those words, because some of them are important, and maybe have a preamble to this. As my colleague says, get the flowery language up in the preamble that doesn't have any basis in law, but then get the purposes very highly focused, because what'll happen here is that these purposes are so loose you'll be able to justify doing just about anything. That's going to be the problem. We should have, as you say, the sharp focus to make sure we produce highly skilled people so that, yes, their lives will be better, because that's the ultimate goal of this. Let's start getting the goal focused.

Mr McKelvey: I certainly believe the board of trade and the business steering committee would embrace any opportunity to work with government on the legislation to achieve that, and in doing so, we would not in any way harm some of the social objectives that ultimately the government has.

Mr Ramsay: I agree with you also that we've got to make sure we include all trainers. It's got to be all-inclusive, and we shouldn't be putting our biases in for some trainers against others. I think we should encourage OTAB and the LTABs to get the best trainers out there for the job.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): Thank you for your presentation. I want to focus in on the fixed-fees aspect, and I'd like to get your comment on this. You clearly indicated that fees can be charged. You're quite concerned about that.

Mr McKelvey: Our concern on the fees is more at a technical level. Technically, we think that—

Mr Offer: Okay. I'd just like to bring forward a few points. This is what's going to be called a schedule 4 agency, which is a new creation. The ability of the schedule 4 agency will be to be completely funded out of revenue generated by its own programs. Ontario Hydro is one such example.

You know, as you've brought forward, that the OFL is going to be a fairly large driving force on this board, and it has spoken in favour of training levies. When one takes a look at the legislation, that fees can be charged, the second point is that it is this new schedule 4 agency, which will generate its own revenues.

The third aspect is that the OFL is a driving force on the board that has already spoken in favour of training levies. I would like your comment as to what you believe the impact would be if this was the forerunner to an employer's levy on training in this province.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Offer. Go ahead, sir.

Mr McKelvey: Perhaps naively so, we weren't really looking at the clause as being threatening in any specific way. We are certainly on record as not supporting any training tax or training levy. We think we need to evaluate the quality and the results of training in a more appropriate way, and that business is going to do the right thing. But with regard to that specific clause, we did not look at it as being any particular threat. We just thought it was ridiculous to have this enshrined in the regulations.

One final comment in terms of the schedule 4 is that this unique designation seems to be able to take on the characteristics it chooses to or chooses not to. So it has, by definition, a considerable amount of flexibility.

The Chair: The committee thanks you, Mr McKelvey, and the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto for your interest in this matter and for your participation in this process. It's an important contribution to the work that the committee and the Legislature do. We trust you'll keep in touch. Should you want to make more views or more insights known, we invite you to do so. We're grateful to you.

Mr McKelvey: Thank you very much.

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SCARBOROUGH BOARD OF EDUCATION

The Chair: The next participant is the Scarborough Board of Education, if those people would please come forward, have a seat, and tell us their names and positions, if any. We've already received your written submissions, which form part of the record by virtue of being filed as an exhibit. Please go ahead. Try to save the last 15 minutes of your half-hour for dialogue and exchanges.

There's the coffee and beverages at the side. That's for members of the public so that they can feel at home and comfortable, and of course these are public hearings. It's a cold, slushy day out there. This is one of the finest locations of the best free coffee in Toronto. It's not particularly well known, but we're doing our best. Go ahead.

Mr Ross Henderson: Mr Chairman, ladies and gentlemen, we are here this morning as educators who work in adult programs in Scarborough. I am Ross Henderson. I hold a position as head of program development at Scarborough Centre for Alternative Studies, which is Scarborough's all-adult day school. With me is Roger O'Dell, head of program learning resources at that same school, and Penny Mustin, vice-principal of Maplewood High School, a school in which half the student population is made up of adults.

We have prepared a brief, which we would like to present to you in approximately the first 15 minutes of our allotted time, after which we would be pleased to answer any questions that you may have.

We are here representing the Scarborough Board of Education. We are pleased to have this opportunity to be

involved in the consultation process for Bill 96. As adult educators we are gratified that this provincial government is taking a leadership role in the provision of education and retraining in Ontario.

Bill 96 addresses many of the concerns that adult trainers and educators have experienced as economic and social change has increased client demand for relevant, flexible programming. OTAB reflects our philosophy that retraining should exist within a comprehensive framework that incorporates accessibility, accountability and equity of opportunity in a coherent model.

While we support the philosophy of the legislation, the impact of certain provisions cause us concern. We have two specific areas of concern. First, the legislation seems to create an additional level of education and training bureaucracy that will make adult education more expensive and less accessible. Secondly, our reading of the legislation suggests to us that there may be a lack of familiarity with the nature, extent and value of adult programs currently provided in publicly funded school boards.

It is our intention to provide you with an overview of the Scarborough Board of Education's involvement in adult education and training. We believe Scarborough is an ideal community to examine, because it is a microcosm of the new social and economic realities of the changing Canadian society.

As a large urban community, Scarborough has undergone changes in demographics that have put new and different demands on education systems, particularly in terms of adult education. For example, the 1992 yearly average of active welfare assistance cases rose from 14,962 to 22,212 in 1992. From 1986 to 1991 the demands on English-as-a-second-language programs grew as first-language speakers of Chinese, Filipino, Polish, Spanish, Arabic, Punjabi, Urdu, Hindi and Tamil more than doubled. The percentage of single-parent families in Scarborough has increased 21.3% in the same five-year period. Clearly, one can see that these social and economic changes have impacted Scarborough in a way that creates more demand for adult upgrading and retraining opportunities.

Mr Roger O'Dell: The profile of adult learners in Scarborough schools has changed significantly between the mid-1980s and the present. In 1980 adults in Ontario's schools represented 6.6% of the student population. That number has grown in Ontario to the point where adult clients now make up over 20% of students in the education system. The adult education population has grown tremendously in Scarborough. This tremendous growth has been addressed by our board in a pragmatic and realistic manner.

In the mid-1980s the profile of the adult learner in Scarborough was as follows: 75% of the adult students were women; average age was in the mid-20s. Within this 75% were three distinct groups: young women who left school prematurely for personal reasons and were now ready to return and had good skills and the motivation to complete diploma requirements; young people who had low success in the school system, had left disappointed and were returning still with low skills, often low self-esteem and needing much, both in terms of skills and support; older women who wanted to renew or polish

skills before returning to the workforce after a significant absence. The other 25% of the client group was made up of men who were early school leavers and a small contingent of students new to Canada requiring English-as-a-second-language classes. Essentially, the client base was made up of low-skilled, English-as-a-first-language Canadian citizens who were seeking to improve their circumstances.

Today the adult student profile is quite different. While 75% are still women, the average age has increased to over 30. The population of young women is still evident but in smaller numbers. The third group, older women returning to the workforce, has all but disappeared. However, we are now seeing people, the majority of whom are displaced workers and new Canadians who are struggling to gain skills which will allow them to enter the Canadian workforce. Indeed, well over 50% of all adult students have a language other than English as their first language. Our new wave of adult clients require English assessment and evaluation, counselling, educational planning and skill training appropriate to Canadian business and industry. Limitations for most adult students are, as always, time, money and opportunity.

Our client group of displaced workers is facing additional challenges not just of unemployment, but the recognition that the jobs they have held have disappeared for ever from the workplace and they need to upgrade to have any hope of returning to self-sufficiency.

The Scarborough Board of Education has responded to the challenge of serving adults within the school system in a variety of ways, each designed to meet the needs of the specific community. In some schools adults are integrated into classes with adolescents. In other schools adult and adolescent populations share a building and an administration but operate separately. We also have a fully adult high school with a population of 1,100 students. The Scarborough board has also addressed the demand through continuing education by providing courses to meet adult needs.

This has created a new dimension between the public and private sectors in education in Scarborough. Support services have increased. Support networking has grown tremendously. Staffs have retrained to meet demands. Teachers have had to increase their familiarity with educational opportunities for adults as school boards become educational brokers. Often when adult clients arrive they are unaware of the choices available to them.

The perception of adult education has changed. Lifelong learning is an accepted norm. The challenges for educational systems are great. Scarborough has shown commitment to serving all students in its care. Looking to the future and continuing to be responsive to changing needs is part of that commitment.

Part of the perceived need for the Ontario training and adjustment board has been the demand for a rationalized continuum of adult education and labour adjustment. It cites the need for changes in retraining that keep pace with industrial and social change. The desire for new programming and reduced spending has long been a concern of the school board sector.

The growth of adult education in Scarborough has resulted in creative responses and adjustments to program.

Some of these responses are represented in the growth of partners in education. The Scarborough board has developed many community partners in its attempt to meet the demands of a changing client. Let us describe a few of these relationships.

First we must look at labour adjustment. As early as 1987, the Scarborough board, through its adult school, the Scarborough Centre for Alternative Studies, in conjunction with General Motors of Canada, provided innovative programs for shift workers which would allow employees to complete diplomas and require courses to meet the company's own standards for apprenticeship training. In a period of two years, many students successfully completed this program. A similar partnership between the Scarborough Board of Education and the city of Scarborough prepared city employees for access to promotion by providing them education in the workplace which resulted in Ontario secondary school diplomas. Laura Secord of Canada has upgraded employees in computer skills through innovative programming at SCAS.

One of our significant community partners is the Metropolitan social services department. Through them, many adults who require additional skills and training are identified and referred to the Scarborough school system. One particular program, employment assessment and support through education, EASE, provides for clients to participate in a short-term educational focusing program. This program is partnered in that clients can only gain access by direct referral from Metro social services. To date, over 300 students have benefited from the EASE experience. Other links with Metro social services are with programs such as focus on change groups, opportunity for advancement groups and students from Rosalie Hall, all of which are support agencies for the socially disadvantaged.

1130

Ms Penny Mustin: All of these partnerships serve to underscore a pattern. When anyone from big business, government agencies, community groups through to the individual looks for access to education and training, they look to the publicly funded school board for help, direction and leadership.

School boards recognize they are not the only deliverers of adult programming, and the Scarborough Board of Education has a history of reaching out to other agencies to enhance programs to meet the needs of its clients. We have successfully partnered with the federal government to provide through LINC, language instruction for newcomers to Canada, language training for 1,000 new Canadians this year alone. We have been a long-time partner with Canadian Jobs Strategy in the operation of federally funded training programs. Successful projects have to date trained adults for employment in jobs related to accounting, office procedures, microcomputers, building construction, child care, working with the elderly, cosmetology and hospitality.

By partnering with public boards of education, these programs are enhanced by not just training but by tying training to granting high school credits. Graduates get the added benefit of an employer-valued secondary school

diploma. This also attests to the professionalism and experience of the public education system in skills delivery.

Many adults who return to school need a range of educational services beyond the mandate of one deliverer. We have in the Scarborough public education system been able to make links to other levels of education which better serve adult clients. One such link is through articulation programs. At present, we have in place six formally articulated programs with community colleges: four programs with Centennial College and two with George Brown. Such programs provide for concurrent training in both the public school system and the college system and smooth the client's transition to further education and skills training.

Skills training programs often have, as part of the course, a significant period of time where the student is placed in business or industry in a cooperative work placement. At present, we are actively engaged with over 200 employers, each of whom contributes and benefits significantly through partnership with public education. Often, this experience results in employment for adults who would find the job search process overwhelming.

We, like the initiators of OTAB, see a need for inter-ministerial cooperation. Our most recent partnership project is with the Ministry of Skills Development. We're planning jointly, through assessment and training, to prepare motor vehicle mechanics whose training has been in other countries for entry into the trade in Ontario with an Ontario licence. We see that these kinds of cooperation will be more easily facilitated by the new superministry of Education and Training.

These are but some of the client-driven education and training activities that the public education sector, and in particular the Scarborough Board of Education, has developed.

It has been our intent here today to highlight the important role that has been played by publicly funded boards of education. Our reading of the document *Skills to Meet the Challenge* has compelled us to reiterate this major role in that it seems to have been so greatly underemphasized. We hope we've been able to articulate for you the nature and extent of our involvement in adult training and upgrading.

School boards have in place not only programming but also accessibility in every community in Ontario, creating an unparalleled equity of access. We have in place democratically elected care takers of our institutions who are directly responsible to the voting public. We have in place a fiscally responsible infrastructure in every community in Ontario. We have in place partnerships with the provincial government, not just in our own ministry but with Skills Development, Citizenship, Community and Social Services and with the federal government through federally funded programs. We have in place a well-trained and committed community of educators and we have a hard-fought history of client-driven, grass-roots-generated, flexible programming changing almost daily to meet the social and economic structure of our society.

We hope that with the introduction of OTAB into the educational training sector we will see accompanying it a lifelong learning policy that will provide the direction for adult education in Ontario. We further hope that the

mechanisms established within OTAB will be implemented in such a way that publicly funded school boards will not only be permitted but encouraged to continue to pursue their active and client-valued role in education.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Farnan, please.

Mr Farnan: Very briefly, I appreciate your presentation. I note that it is generally supportive of the thrust of the legislation. Of course, any group that designed the legislation itself might make it somewhat differently. Indeed, we shouldn't be surprised that there are nuances as different groups come in and suggest maybe a little more here or a little less there.

We have had groups appear before us and question the publicly funded education system role within this specific paragraph, 4(1)16, which says, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operation, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education system."

Paragraph 15 also adds, "To make effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources," so it's not exclusive. But nevertheless, this legislation does recognize the historic role and the significant role of publicly funded education.

How do you feel about groups that come here and say, "This should not be included in the legislation"? My own view, of course, is that basically the legislation is a compromise, making the best use of all the skills and talents we have. I'd like to hear your remarks.

Ms Mustin: I think we're here for two reasons. We haven't directly addressed OTAB in great detail, but we've talked about what you're talking about: publicly funded education and the access adults have to it. I think our responses, first and foremost, right from the beginning of OTAB—we have a feeling that nobody knows what it is we do. I think that the presence of adults in high schools in these numbers is very new and I think there are groups out there that have no recognition, through no fault of their own, that adults are present there. We feel the need to articulate these kinds of things and maybe in some cases we would challenge some of those groups in terms of their knowledge of what we're doing.

I think secondly that we are concerned a precedent could be set that these kinds of programs could be capped and some programs moved across to OTAB. That concerns us not so much on behalf of other groups that object, but because as school boards in Ontario, we are often the only game in town, and if there is some kind of precedent set to move any programs to OTAB, they might become less accessible. That's more on behalf of the client than it is on behalf of boards of education.

Mr Farnan: You have articulated very well what you do and the good work of your organization is reflected right across the province in other publicly funded educational systems. Let me give you the assurance that the minister knows and the government knows, and because we know, it is incorporated very solidly into the legislation, despite the fact that some people out there will say it shouldn't be there. We recognize your contribution and we want to avail ourselves of the expertise and commitment that you have and will provide to this legislation.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. It was very well thought out and I enjoyed listening to it. I want to go back to the very first point you made, because it's a concern I share. You say, "First, the legislation seems to create an additional level of education and training bureaucracy that will make adult education more expensive and less accessible." I certainly hope not, but you might be right.

Really, what we're designing here is sort of the school boards in perpetuity for training beyond the jurisdiction that you look after: elementary and secondary schools. This is like a new set of school boards that will be more broadly based—only 22 of them in the province—but yes, it's another bureaucracy. I'm quite concerned about that. We will be taking 700 civil servants from various ministries and putting them together in this new entity called OTAB. That will be the support for the new board, and basically that's all the legislation talks about. Then hopefully the board will be forming these local boards right around the province.

But you're right: It's another bureaucracy to go through. Right now, as you've mentioned with your great examples of General Motors, Laura Secord and other companies, business has come to you to ask you to provide programs. Right now the system is very client-driven. The customer comes to you and if you don't have it, you won't get it, but if you can put on the program, you're going to get it and be able to sell the service. I'm just wondering how the filtration of a local board is going to affect that connection, that linkage you have today. Do you fear that linkage will be broken by this, or at least interrupted?

Ms Mustin: I think what we have now is that everybody knows that when they're looking for education, they go to the school. I'm not as convinced that people will know that when they're looking for education, they go to OTAB.

To go back earlier to your question about elementary and secondary, I'm also looking at a huge displaced worker population, the majority of whom do not have secondary school diplomas. What we have done is educate all employers everywhere to say, "Where's your high school diploma?" but we're dealing with a displaced worker population that doesn't necessarily have one, and the advantage of some of our partnerships is being able to tie credit granting to retraining. Many of our graduates—training program graduates, not just high school graduates—can go out with their diplomas and now have something that will document their training. I worry sometimes that some of this random training might dilute that ability to produce that documentation.

1140

Mr McGuinty: Thank you for your presentation. I have to agree with you in your expression of concern that the legislation, the bill, fails to recognize the role that our public school system has played and can continue to play in the future with respect to offering training.

We heard from the public school board sector, I think it was, the working group. They told us something which I found incredible in terms of the numbers: There were some 977,000 adults enrolled in high school programs in

1991 in Ontario. One of the points they put forward—and I want to ask if you agree with this; I assume you do; maybe you can elaborate on it a little bit—was that with that many people out there involved in the education-training programs offered by our high schools, why do school boards not have a seat on OTAB? Why are you not represented there as one of the key partners?

Mr Farnan: Mr Chair, on a point of clarification, please.

The Chair: Go ahead. Do these people want to respond first or do you want to use up their time?

Mr Farnan: No, I'll have the clarification afterwards.

The Chair: Go ahead.

Ms Mustin: I think we all recognize that given our choice, we would have a seat on OTAB. There's no question. Certainly, we have the numbers that, as you say, would generate support for a seat on OTAB, but we don't have a seat on OTAB. That working group has worked very hard in collaboration with some of the other deliverers to see if we can come up with something that will best serve the client, because when we look at this adult client, it is not a particularly advantaged group, and gaining access for them is difficult.

I don't think anyone in the public boards would ever say anything other than, "We want a seat, we want a seat, we want a seat," but given that we're not going to have a seat, I think we have to work in some kind of cooperative model with the people who have been appointed to that board.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Farnan, a brief point.

Mr Farnan: Very briefly, Mr McGuinty obviously has not read the legislation. He simply said the bill does not recognize—

The Chair: Fair enough. Go ahead, Mr Villeneuve.

Mr Farnan: Mr Chair, article 16 clearly states—

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Villeneuve, go ahead, please.

Mr Noble Villeneuve (S-D-G & East Grenville): Thank you to the Scarborough board—

Mr Farnan: Article 16 clearly states—

The Chair: Don't let yourself be sidetracked. Go ahead, Mr Villeneuve.

Mr Villeneuve: —for making an interesting presentation. You're on the leading edge of adult retraining; no doubt about it. It's rather sad, as my colleague just mentioned, that the school boards are not represented. Can you explain to the committee the demographic changes of your clients back in the 1980s as compared to the 1990s. I found that very intriguing, and you have these statistics right there. Certainly, the people who will be attempting to foresee the needs and the requirements of the public should take a very close look at this, because what the requirements were in 1980 have very drastically changed in your situation.

I come from the far southeastern portion of Ontario, where the economic situation is not good, and we have many adults attending schools, not necessarily at the secondary level, just attempting to be able to function better.

Could I have your comments on what you foresee, based on the experience you've had over the last 12 years?

Mr O'Dell: I guess the primary change for us has resulted from immigration; that is, the number of people sweeping into Scarborough from other countries, who need language, who need orientation to Canadian society and need some way to translate their previous skills and education into the Ontario experience. That's certainly one change.

I suppose the other change has been the whole question of the economic downturn, such things, for instance, as the General Motors van plant in Scarborough closing, and as Penny has mentioned the number of workers there who do not have transferable skills, do not have a high school diploma, and in terms of retraining perhaps lack the language skills, the learning skills, the mathematical skills to retrain, where we would have to provide some of those basic learning skills before they could move on to retrain in other situations.

Mr Villeneuve: I think people such as yourselves across the province of Ontario, who are right up on the day-to-day needs of people who want to be retrained, should definitely have some direct input to the directors of OTAB. I hope there is a mechanism there for that to occur on an ongoing basis.

The Chair: Mr Hansen is visiting this committee, this being a democratic committee which encourages participation by all members of the provincial Legislature, as compared to some others. Mr Hansen, please be seated. Would you care to participate in any of the dialogue with the representatives from the Scarborough Board of Education?

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): Not at this time.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. I want to express sincere thanks to the Scarborough Board of Education for its participation in this process. You've obviously piqued some interest in the members of the committee. That's clear from the types of exchanges you had with them. We trust you will be tracking this legislation as it goes through committee and then into the Legislature. We welcome you to convey any further comments, either individually or collectively, to the committee. Thank you kindly for coming downtown this morning.

ONTARIO WOMEN'S ACTION ON TRAINING COALITION

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition. These people will please come forward.

Mr Villeneuve: Mr Chair, while the ladies are taking their place, may I ask through you, sir, for unanimous consent for my colleague the member for Mississauga South to replace me after lunch? I'm simply asking for unanimous consent, which I gather is a requirement.

The Chair: Mr Villeneuve, I'm not sure that's necessary, but I'm sure there's unanimous consent, isn't there?

Interjections.

The Chair: Thank you. You have unanimous consent.

Mr Villeneuve: Thank you.

The Chair: Please sit down so that the mikes can pick you up, but do it as you wish.

Ms Karen Charnow Lior: Good morning. My name is Karen Charnow Lior. I'm here to represent the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition. We're going to start with a short theatre piece.

The Chair: Let me extend my very best wishes to the people in the broadcast booth. Don't make real fast moves, because the camera's got to follow you, okay? People are watching at home and they're interested. Try to keep the volume up so the mikes can pick you up, please.

[Dramatic presentation]

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Ms Annamaria Menozzi: Hello, everyone. My name is Annamaria Menozzi. I'm an immigrant Canadian and the women's nominee to OTAB. I'm here to support Karen today.

Ms Charnow Lior: And as I said earlier, my name is Karen Charnow Lior. I am the government liaison from the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition and I'm the coordinator of Advocates for Community Based Training and Education for Women.

Mr Chairman and members of the committee, the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition/Coalition formation des femmes d'action de l'Ontario represents a broad spectrum of women from across the province, over 800 groups and individuals. The coalition brings together a diversity of Ontario women activists, including advocates, learners, teachers, union members, women in non-traditional occupations, women in technology and community-based trainers. We are visible minority women, white women, women of ability and disability, women of various creeds, francophones, aboriginal women, rural and urban, immigrant and Canadian-born, farm workers and industrial workers, young and old, gay and straight.

We are pleased that the process of the OTAB consultations provided an opportunity for women to be directly involved in policy development on issues related to skills training, as stated in section 1 under the purposes of this act, to play a role "in the design and delivery of labour force development programs and services."

This has been a difficult process. While women's coalition-building has been a positive side-effect of the OTAB consultations, the numbers on the governing body reflect the marginalization that we have often experienced during these consultations, a marginalization that mirrors women's experience in the labour force. While we welcome the integration of social and economic policy in the OTAB legislation, our previous experience warns us to be cynical.

Women's experience of skills training has not been happy. Our primary responsibility for young children, elders and persons with disabilities, compounded by our high concentration in sectors of the labour force where the routine provision of skills training is rare, makes it difficult to access high-quality training. In addition, systemic discrimination means we can expect lower compensation for the jobs we do and greater vulnerability in the workplace with every economic downturn.

We see the proposed democratization of the training system as successful only if it includes a commitment to social equity in Ontario. The Ontario Training and Adjustment Board is a beginning, a component of a process to eliminate discrimination against equity-seeking groups. The board will need to be established consistent with the reforms introducing employment equity, extending pay equity and providing real enforcement to the Ontario Human Rights Code.

We hope that our participation in these consultations and our recommendations, if accepted, will move us substantially towards a training system which facilitates rather than compromises equity, access and quality. Let me elaborate on these basic principles.

Equity: Training must become a vehicle for increasing equity in Ontario. Training must enhance and support mandatory employment equity and pay equity policies with clear goals and timetables. Employment equity must be linked to the entire labour adjustment and training system.

Access: We believe in an integrated, accessible training system as a right for all residents of Ontario. The system must be learner-centred with adequate collateral supports. Freedom from a poisoned environment created by sexual and racial harassment must be guaranteed, as specified by the Ontario Human Rights Commission in its anti-harassment policies.

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Quality: Training must be generic and developmental, with mechanisms for portability and transferability of skills. The new training boards must establish one integrated system that meets the needs of all individuals at all points in their lives. People don't only need skills for working; they need skills for living in healthy, economically vibrant communities. We want to ensure that social equity objectives are first established, then achieved and maintained within a training system that promotes social justice as well as economic objectives.

I would like to describe women's experience in the labour force. In 1970 a family could meet its basic needs with an average 45 hours of paid employment a week. In 1990 that figure increased to 65 to 80 hours of paid employment a week. Women's earnings are as essential to the standard of living of the family as those of men, yet women's earnings are still only between 65 and 70 cents on the dollar compared to what men earn. In 1990 women working full-time and full-year earned an average of \$25,000 compared to men working full-time full-year, who earned \$37,000.

According to the March 1992 Labour Force Survey, women now account for at least 45% of the paid labour force across Canada, and participation rates for women with children aged 3 to 16 are around 70%. Women now spend between 34 and 37 years in the paid labour force; 70% of all part-time workers are women and 25% of all employed women work part-time.

In eight years, by 2001, almost 66% of new entrants into the job market will be women. Part of the difference in the earnings of men and women is accounted for by the relative concentration of women in low-wage sectors of

the labour market. Women are found for the most part in the clerical and services sectors or in the informal or voluntary sector. Women are often engaged at a highly responsible level with work requiring expert skills. This work in care giving or personal services is largely unpaid and invisible. Little job-related or in-service training is done in any of these areas.

Where workplace-related training does occur, it is rarely accessible to women who have fragile attachments to the workplace and non-workplace responsibilities for children, elders or persons with disabilities. This also has impacts on the kinds of upgrading opportunities available both to women who are employed and those who want to be employed. Traditional women's occupations involve the management of knowledge or information rather than relying on physical strength. Therefore, access to training which enhances those skills is particularly important for women entering or re-entering the labour force.

Women whose jobs are vulnerable because of new-skill technology should and must be reskilled and retrained. Present employers must bear the responsibility for their employees.

In order for Bill 96 to address the inequities of women's participation in the labour force by recognizing "the principles of access and equity in labour force development," as stated in "Purposes," clause 1(c), we recommend the following:

(1) That it is the role of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board to set the standards of excellence and to link employment equity policy to funding.

(2) That effective labour force development and labour adjustment strategies must include ways of overcoming the systemic barriers faced by many women in trying to access the workforce, to stay employed and advance in employment.

Those barriers include the lack of equity and discrimination relating to class, race and gender, lack of income support while training, difficulty in finding and maintaining quality affordable child care, lack of support services such as counselling, referral and resources information on sexual harassment, lack of employment and lack of recognition of offshore accreditation and experience.

(3) That an accountable and equitable process for women's participation in OTAB and the local boards be developed.

With specific reference to the enabling legislation we recommend:

(1) Under "Criteria," clause 4(2)(b), that there be the specific mention of public accountability, and in (c), ensure that appropriations address geographical and regional disparities.

You will hear tomorrow, and you have heard previously from the Fort Frances-Kenora women's coalition, of the barrier that distance creates, of the enormous difficulty in getting to a training program that's 100 kilometres away and the road is closed at least once a week. Eligibility requirements for participation must also be adjusted for the various regions.

In 2(d) the legislation needs to clarify what is to be done, not leaving everything to the regulations.

(2) In section 9, "Directors," paragraph 4, we are not interested in the recognition of gender balance, nor in seeking to ensure it. We want gender balance ensured.

(3) In section 12, "Meetings," we recommend that all meetings be public.

Our primary concerns are with section 4, "Objects":

(1) In paragraph 5, we want to eliminate the words "to seek to ensure" and replace them with "to ensure."

(2) We agree with the intent in paragraph 6 of the importance of making skills more portable, but would add that these models must also provide for the recognition and accreditation of offshore training and experience. The recommendations of the report on access to trades and professions must be incorporated into the OTAB training programs as well as a mechanism for prior learning assessment.

(3) In paragraph 9 we want the phrase "to seek to ensure access and equity in labour force development programs and services" replaced with "to ensure."

(4) Again in paragraph 10, "seeking to eliminate barriers" is not good enough. Barriers have been identified again and again; legislations and mechanisms to eliminate them have been developed. The OTAB legislation must set as a major objective the elimination of systemic and other discriminatory barriers.

I would like to reiterate something mentioned yesterday by the racial minorities' presentation, and that is paragraph 15, to recognize the importance of publicly funded, not-for-profit, community-based training through the allocation of stable, multi-year funding.

Only when there is the full participation of workers and potential workers in a fair and just society will the role of equity-seeking groups as labour market partners move from one of tokenism to one of playing a significant role.

The women of Ontario are tired of partisan policies and behaviour. We urge every member of this committee to put aside entrenched positions and finalize the OTAB legislation as concrete equity legislation for all Ontarians.

The Chair: Mr Offer, please.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I think that the information you brought forward in your brief is very specific as to what must be addressed and how it should be addressed. I thank you for that. Certainly it goes without saying that the dramatization was one which I think many people will remember for a great deal of time, and I thank you for that.

I know we have a short period of time. I'd like to ask a question on something that might not be necessarily in the brief, and that deals with the establishment of local boards. I appreciate that a great deal of your presentation was directed to the agency itself, and there was just some mention about the local board situation. What I would like to get from you before you leave today is your thoughts as to how you see the establishment of local boards and whether their creation should be mandatory in the legislation where it isn't now.

Ms Menozzi: You're asking a very difficult question since the local boards, the way they're going to be structured, will have responsibility for federal funding as well which

OTAB may or may not be able to have jurisdiction over. Those are the kinds of questions we have in our mind to which we don't have the answers ourselves.

We certainly are looking, though, at the local boards as new structures that are eliminating the previous structures of the committees. They're still training committees, where we finally as women have some participation even if we feel that one seat in this local board or a minority of seats in this local board for women is certainly tokenism.

We are certainly organizing in the local areas in the 22 or 25 maybe—who knows how many there are going to be—to make sure that the women's issues are brought forward and that the other labour partners who will select representatives on the local board are not looking at establishing and maintaining and not seeking to ensure gender parity.

We're looking at the local board as a prospect for us to organize and a prospect for women to enter the game and to be able to finally voice what our needs are, which has not been happening with the previous system. Does that answer your question? This is how we perceive the local boards.

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Mr Offer: Yes, it is helpful. Dealing again with the local board situation, from your perspective, is the strength of the OTAB, is the strength of meeting the needs that you've brought forward, the access, the equity, the lifelong learning, going to be primarily met through a strong local board or, by another word, community involvement, or will it take its strength from the agency down?

Ms Menozzi: It's got to be both ways.

Ms Charnow Lior: Across.

Ms Menozzi: Legislation is important because it may give people the ability to bring forward the issues and the strength of saying, "This is the policy of this government, the policy of this province." It gives us strength to be able to advocate for more participation if we have strong legislation. That's why we're here.

Mr Offer: I guess it just goes without saying that you are saying that on both the local board and the agency, you must have a strong voice to chart the direction of the province in terms of training, retraining and adjustment.

Ms Menozzi: Right.

Mr Villeneuve: Thank you very much, ladies, for your skit and your presentation. In your opinion, is this more economic legislation or more equity or social-oriented legislation? Which, in your opinion, is it?

Ms Menozzi: I think the question in itself is making us look at this as a different situation. It's not. The two must go hand in hand. You cannot train people for jobs that don't exist. We must have an economic plan. We must have a vibrant economy for us to be able to train in jobs that give us a quality life. The two must go hand in hand.

Mr Villeneuve: So you're putting as much emphasis on the social aspect as you do on the economic aspect.

Ms Menozzi: In order to work, yes, at the end. But right now the social aspect has not been, for a number of years, part of any legislation around these kinds of

issues, and therefore we need to reach that balance first. It's not there.

Mr Villeneuve: One of your predecessors in the chair this morning wanted to remove some of the social connotations and bring it strictly to economic objectives. Quite obviously, you would have some disagreement there.

Ms Menozzi: Very many disagreements.

Ms Charnow Lior: Lots of it.

Mr Villeneuve: I assumed that. You make a statement here on page 3 that "Freedom from a poisoned environment created by sexual and racial harassment must be guaranteed, as specified by the Ontario Human Rights Commission in its anti-harassment policies." You assume that this exists everywhere? Do you have substantiation to that? Second, how do you correct it if indeed it's that rampant?

Ms Menozzi: Number one, we do have a policy under the Ontario Human Rights Commission, which is exactly called freedom from harassment, whether sexual or racial harassment. We do have a piece of legislation and we're coming in front of you to say: "This piece of legislation exists. Please take a look at it and make sure that your legislation, that which you will finalize, includes consideration for that legislation and for those policies." That policy came up a year and a half ago and it does exist.

Mr Villeneuve: Final question: You do have that protection under the human rights commission. You quite obviously feel that this is rampant throughout areas where women work. Could you elaborate on that a little bit? Just how rampant is it?

Ms Menozzi: The statistics are talking for themselves in terms of the vulnerability of women here. You can spend some time and re-read that. The kind of situation that we are seeing, like what has happened recently in terms of statements from a federal politician, the kind of statements we heard yesterday in relation to harassment, is telling us that it's not taken seriously. It's there, believe me. We all suffer it. To major or lesser degrees, we are all at risk of it as women, and please believe us that this is what we feel every day. Karen may want to add something to that.

Ms Charnow Lior: There was a study that was just publicized last week about date rape on campus. It's like 6 out of 10, 8 out of 10. It's out there; 6,000 women are raped a minute.

Mr Villeneuve: Date rape and OTAB is a little different, though, isn't it?

Ms Charnow Lior: The permissiveness around the atmosphere of sexual harassment is a problem in the workplace and out of the workplace.

Ms Menozzi: And in the training programs.

Mr Villeneuve: Thank you.

Mr Farnan: First of all, like my colleagues in opposition, I want to congratulate you on the quality of the presentation. I think you do stand in a great tradition of advocacy in terms of equity. I do believe that you have stated very clearly the exclusion of women in the past and

the frustration that brings with it. I also have a sense that you see this legislation as somewhat of an opportunity and that you want to ensure that the opportunity is maximized to its fullest.

As with every other group, business will come here and say, "Well, it's not exactly the way we want it," and labour will say, "It's not exactly the way we want it," and trainers will say, "It's not exactly the way we want it." But there is a compromise at work, and I believe this government has a solid record of commitment to equity issues and is moving the marker forward.

Now whether it moves forward to the degree that will satisfy is something that you will make judgements of, and I have no doubt that if it doesn't go sufficiently far, you will be there to tell us. But I think we're moving in the right direction. Thank you.

The Chair: Feel free to respond.

Ms Menozzi: Was that a question?

Ms Charnow Lior: It was a comment.

Mr Farnan: I think I am trying to summarize where we're at.

Ms Menozzi: I'd like to respond to your last comment, where you are stating that you believe we will be around to tell you if we think you're not doing a good job. Unfortunately, we don't have that certainty either. The kind of support for our organizing, the kind of resources for our organizing that have been provided to us is really very minimal. So we feel that our ability to bring our voice to you, to the community is really not stable. It's a very fragile position. That's the funding issue, and we are obviously working through, again, the OTAB project, but we need stable funding for our organizing, and then we can say, yes we'll be there to bring the issues to the forefront.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, and please be brief unless you want to use up all of Mr Hugert's time.

Mr Gary Wilson: I just want to congratulate you on bringing the issues to us so vividly both in your skit and in your presentation.

I too want to pick up on what Mike was saying about the possibility and the hopefulness of OTAB. I'm sure you recognize that it can't do everything. As you point out in your presentation, barriers have been identified again and again. These aren't things that are new; it's just getting the political will to overcome them.

We've been hearing from presentations that not everyone who will be participating in OTAB sees it exactly as you do, but I'm hoping that through your participation, you can work with them and pick up on their issues as well so that, through the discussion, we can move to eliminating those barriers.

Ms Menozzi: I'd like just then to mention again, you know, make a further comment: We are not an interest group. We are 51% of the population.

Ms Charnow Lior: It's 52%.

Ms Menozzi: It's 52%, I'll just get this correction. So we are not an interest group and when people are saying, "We are seeing business saying such-and-such, labour saying such-and-such," I'd like to remind you that we are

business, that we are labour, that women are in those positions and are marginalized in each and every one of those positions.

It's not that we should be looked at as an interest group—we are there in business and labour and all of these structures—but we need to have the recognition that there is discrimination in all of these structures for us to be able to go to the top. If that is not recognized, then the OTAB legislation as well, with this kind of weak wording, seeks to ensure—which is what has been repeated through the skit as well—you know, this kind of wording is continuing to maintain that particular kind of status, for us to be marginalized in all of those areas.

Mr Bob Hugert (Sarnia): Thank you very much for your presentation. I want to refer to some of the numbers that you have in your presentation around the numbers in the workforce, particularly around the numbers of women in the workforce. I want to refer back again to Mr Villeneuve's question about whether this legislation is economic in nature or social in nature.

When I look at the numbers that you refer to of women, for example, in the workforce and the projections of women in the workforce, I have to ask myself whether any thinking person would disconnect those two issues. In order for us to have economic renewal in the province, we must have an element of social justice, and that must be based on inclusion, not exclusion. I think there are still people in society who think we are doing quite an admirable job and are quite quick to pat themselves on the back about how much we are doing to indeed create equity.

I think some people would be surprised about the systemic barriers in many, many workplaces, particularly around women in the workforce, and also around disabled and people who are challenged in some way, shape or form. So while we may think we've gone light years, I think we ignore the issue of social justice and economic renewal being combined at our peril. My question to you is, what point would there be in indeed creating economic renewal without social justice? Why would a thinking society do that?

Ms Charnow Lior: I think that's a very good question, and it seems to me what Annamaria was saying earlier was that we are not seen as an either/or kind of legislation. We cannot have economic renewal without social policies imbedded and integrated throughout the legislation, because then there isn't economic renewal. All those pieces have to go hand in hand: local economic development, local boards, community development and bringing people together so that we have have economic renewal in this province and people working and participating fully in economic and social life. So yes, we agree with you. It doesn't make any sense to us to do one without the other.

The Chair: The committee thanks you, Ms Lior, Mr Menozzi, for speaking on behalf of the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition. You've made a very effective, dramatic—but far be it from me to criticize drama—presentation, and the committee is grateful to you. We also do want to express thanks to Sharon Lewis, Sarilyn

Zimmerman, Morgan Jones Phillips and Julie Salverson for joining you in your presentation this morning.

I should note, and people watching can note that there is a videotape, a copy of the taping, which was done in an exemplary manner by the legislative broadcast people. It's not easy to pick up performers, as the group Flying Blind was when they prefaced your comments, with the type of facilities, but the legislative broadcast people, Joe Lemieux,

Simon Dalrymple, Tony Givren and Trish Gibney, did an excellent job. The tape will be an impressive one.

People can call their MPPs and obtain a free videotape of your presentation, or as far as that goes, any other presentation that was made here in the Amethyst Room, and I invite people to do that. It's interesting, valuable commentary and warrants perhaps listening to and watching more than once. Thank you kindly. Take care, people.

The committee recessed at 1224

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 1335.

The Chair: It's 1:35 pm. We were scheduled to resume at 1:30. We waited five minutes for committee members to arrive, other than Mr Huget, who's been here since 1:30. We'll not wait any longer because people are scheduled to make their presentations at specific times and it's unfair to those people to delay these things unless it's absolutely necessary.

ONTARIO SOCIETY FOR
TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The Chair: Sir, you're here on behalf of the Ontario Society for Training and Development. Please tell us your name and your status. We've got your written submission. That's been made an exhibit and will form part of the record as a result of being made an exhibit. Go ahead.

Mr Roger Davies: My name is Roger Davies. I'm the president of OSTD, the Ontario Society for Training and Development. Thank you very much for the opportunity to talk to the group. I think it's appropriate that I start off by giving you a bit of background.

OSTD is a not-for-profit association that represents over 1,200 professionals in the field of training and human resource development. Established in 1946, OSTD serves its members by providing a vehicle for establishing contacts, exchanging ideas and sharing experiences and knowledge. Members have the opportunity to enhance their professional abilities, contribute to their profession, present and test their ideas and find new approaches to human resource development.

Our members include a wide range of people. They include HRD apprentices and practitioners, suppliers of products and services, and organizations both in government and in the private sector that are served by these practitioners, products and services. In fact, members include presidents, vice-presidents, directors, managers, instructors, people who design training courses, consultants and suppliers who come from such very different sectors as manufacturing, education, government, health care, high technology, service, finance and small business, as well as not-for-profit.

Our role in OSTD really involves, if you like, promoting the training culture, looking at the big picture, trying to take into account the interests of a very diverse membership. While we're certainly broadly in favour of OTAB—I think we have to make that very clear; we are broadly in favour of it—we do see three main concerns over the establishment of the process, the board:

(1) We would like to ensure that government-sponsored training funds be made clearly accessible to all, and not only through the community college system as has been, dare I say, rumoured, suggested, implied, ie, let the marketplace decide what to buy and who to buy from.

The introductory letter to the OTAB discussion paper—I use it as a focus so that you understand where we're coming from—states: "Ontario's economy is facing immense challenges and change in an increasingly competitive and

global economy. We are acting today to make sure our province prospers in the new economic environment."

OSTD strongly believes this can best be achieved with a focus on both quality and cost-effectiveness of training product. Those service providers who offer a good-quality product at a competitive price have already prospered, the recession notwithstanding, and they will continue to do so in a fair, competitive market.

However, the discussion paper and the bill itself rarely mention these factors, suggesting or implying, whatever word you'd like to use, that the Ontario government does not recognize their significance. Indeed, the discussion paper states, "Stability of service providers, particularly colleges, is important to the government of Ontario." We believe this focus is misplaced and possibly dangerous. If our goal is a skilled, competitive workforce, OTAB should be driven by a desire for quality, not just stability. If we're serious about competing in a global economy, we believe we must embrace the principles of competitiveness in our own province as well.

It's a fact that the private sector training industry competes with the publicly funded college system. It's caused concern and friction in the past. Looking at the current status quo, we're happy to accept this competition and allow the marketplace to make purchasing decisions without government subsidies favouring one sector over another. We estimate, although there are no accurate figures, that the private sector probably provides some 50% of higher education and training. We're happy about competition and we think it's healthy, but only when labour market partners are given an equal opportunity to compete.

We feel it is incumbent upon the regulating body, ie, OTAB, to ensure that no sector involved in training delivery is given preferential treatment.

Purchasers in our membership simply want freedom of choice to buy the best-quality training from whomever they choose. Indeed, in our earlier meetings with Naomi Alboim, we were given repeated assurances that, "The employer will have the final say," yet this does not appear anywhere in Bill 96 or any of the attached documents.

(2) Our second concern: We would like to ensure that training funds will be made available for management training as well as skills development.

According to the Questions and Answers document released along with Bill 96, OTAB will be responsible for provincially funded programs in the four important areas—and you know them well—workplace and sectoral training, apprenticeship, labour force adjustment and labour force entry or re-entry. It is implied in Bill 96 that OTAB will be funnelling significant funds into these four sectors.

However, nowhere in these documents is management and leadership training mentioned. For orientation, what we mean by management training is the training that would be delivered to middle and senior management. In other words, it would cover such things as general executive development, communications skills—we're talking about writing, speaking, listening—thinking skills—the ability to

be creative—computer skills—technology-based training, in other words—total quality management, team building, customer relations, sales and marketing.

I quote from the Questions and Answers document, which states that OTAB is needed because:

"Ontario's economy...is facing tremendous challenges from changes in technology, global trade relationships and competition. More than ever before, we must make sure our workforce has the necessary skills to help drive economic renewal today, and to fill the jobs of tomorrow. We need a coordinated partnership to create a more effective and efficient system of training people and helping them adjust to change that will be able to meet the needs of employers, workers and potential workers."

We wonder, how can OTAB fulfil this mandate when the entire segment of management development is apparently being overlooked? We therefore recommend that the four sectors now listed be broadened specifically to include management and leadership skills training. Simply, we believe, "out of sight, out of mind."

(3) Our third concern: We would like to see more incentives, and not a tax—the key word is "incentives"—for business to commit to training. We believe that not enough senior management understand the relationship between training and success. Financial incentives may be the only way to promote training within organizations.

Talking of financial incentives, the private sector training companies and OSTD are also concerned that under OTAB no mention is made of the financing service for new training product development which is available through the Ontario Training Corp. We would like this retained and indeed expanded to help both new and established training companies. Currently the OTC investment program is, or was, best suited for startup operations, and we would prefer it to be adjusted so that any existing companies would have some opportunities for raising capital.

In summary, as a voice for HRD professionals, one of our roles involves promoting the training culture. Today, too many companies don't spend enough money, if any, on training and it appears that the establishment of OTAB will do nothing to change this. With your leadership and funds, it will be possible to advocate the benefits of training for all business. All sectors from business—small business, medium business—must realize that we have to be deadily earnest about training, not just talking about it but actually doing it.

With great respect, we believe that diverting megadollars to help the unemployed and disadvantaged alone will do little to help Ontario's ability to compete. We all know that Canada and Ontario must create jobs and create exports, and this will be done largely by small and medium businesses. Many of these companies are not now committed to training.

If you wish to establish what we would call a true monument to change, please establish something that takes into account the wishes of all parties, ie, include all the players, provide some incentives, give equal opportunity to community colleges and the private sector training industry, and also acknowledge that management training, along

with labour force development, all must play a vital role in helping Ontario and Canada compete.

In closing, we would like you to be aware that OSTD is committed to advancing the professionalization of the training industry in Ontario. Our members presently have access to the most advanced accreditation process in North America, which we developed. OSTD is now involved in developing a state-of-the-art certification program for the training professional. We will shortly seek provincial legislation to become the agency that establishes and maintains standards of professional competence in the field of training and development.

It is our belief that we must do more than make training available. It is in fact critical that the training be timely, cost-effective, easily accessible to all and valuable. With your help we can promote a training culture to everyone, for everyone. Thanks very much.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Huget, please.

Mr Huget: Thank you very much for your presentation. You have raised some interesting points. In terms of which sector should provide the training, I think we have to back up a little bit and take a look at the needs of the workforce in Ontario. I believe that to be something that will be very much a driver of the process, and not necessarily which supplier can fill the need in the onset. It's determining what those needs are very much from the client base, if you will. I see a role for both institutions, public and private. In fact, a lot of the private sector business training that goes on now is privately funded and I don't think OTAB has any role to play in that in terms of some of that training.

You raised some issues around the competitiveness issue. I think about halfway through your brief you look at management and leadership skills training and you go on to identify a number of areas: executive development, communication skills, computer skills, quality management etc. I think those are all very important issues.

I think businesses that are surviving and prospering today recognized that those were important issues many years ago and have placed some emphasis on that. I think you'll find those are the successful businesses of today and quite likely will be the ones of the future as well. I think OTAB has a role to play in terms of putting a greater sort of awareness on training right through the sector, whether that's at the business management level or at the workforce level.

I guess I'm curious as to what role you would see OTAB playing, for example, in initiating those kinds of what are to me competitive strategic management training issues. The incentive, in my view, is the survival of the corporation. I think the CEOs in the business community should be paying a heck of a lot of attention to that.

I just wonder where you would see OTAB fitting into that, because the casualties the provinces are faced with in a lot of cases are those at a much lower level, the ones that do not have the adaptability or the access to any of these types of management training systems that would make a manager perhaps interchangeable from location A over to location B. I think our problems are a little bit different

than that in terms of the workforce, who are the most vulnerable and seeing the most effect, who don't have access to any of those skills at all and in fact aren't managers; they're front-line workers who have been displaced.

Mr Davies: You've given me a complex question. It's obviously a complex issue, but maybe I could respond as follows: One of the challenges the training industry faces is spreading the word. We can do part of it, there's no question, and there's no question there are people out there who are tuned into training, but the organizations that will be creating the jobs, that are now creating jobs, that will hire the people you will be focusing on specifically through the OTAB process, ie, let's say the unemployed and the disadvantaged—clearly, it's an issue. We need to give them skills, but unless someone creates some jobs, they're going to have the skills and no jobs.

1350

We know that today it's small business and medium-sized business that are creating the jobs. By and large, small business in particular—you know there are thousands of them—is not tuned into training. The reason they're not tuned in, in part, is because if you are a supplier to this industry, you inevitably go after the bigger targets, the Northern Telecoms and the Bell Canadas. They go after them because it is repeat business. In other words, the high cost of marketing in this country is such that it is the same to get the first customer from Bell or from a small business, so inevitably you go after the Bells because you know that if you hook one Bell human resource person there will be a continual word of mouth which will make the training company's investment worthwhile.

If you hook small business, maybe you get one person from one company and that's the end of it. You get no word of mouth, and this profession is very much a word-of-mouth profession. If you were to get training done in your organization, the first question you would be asking of a potential supplier is, "Who have you done it with before, or who would recommend you?" So we can't underestimate the word of mouth.

All I'm saying, really, in summary is that if you can find a way to spread the word to small business and give them some incentives—

Interjection.

Mr Davies: Yes, you're quite right. Some have survived. Many have survived. These are obviously success stories because they have survived, but they need a bit of a nudge just to encourage them to be really committed to training.

Mr Huget: Could you see a role for OTAB? I'd just like your views in terms of what that role would be and how it would work out. In improving the quality of training, no matter where it takes place across the province, whether that's in the private sector or the public sector—company, internal training or whatever—is there a role for OTAB to do something about improving the quality and quantity of training, and how could we do that?

Mr Davies: If you can put together a balanced program that includes everyone, and if you set mechanisms in place to get all the players together, as you are doing, I think that

will be one step. I hate to come back to what I've already mentioned, but I think incentives are one of the key areas of doing it. To date, some of the training already takes place because of incentives that the Ontario Skills Development office process provides; maybe a little more money but not necessarily—yes, great, expand that process, but maybe promote it more, because there are many companies out there that don't know there is funding already available. The message has just not gotten through. As an association, we can promote that too, but many of our members don't know where to go. They just don't know where to go.

Mr Gary Wilson: Don't you think that this would be one of the advantages of OTAB and the structure that it's setting up, that there will be readier access to finding out where to go and what is available?

Mr Davies: Yes, as long as we include the three points that we've raised, because broadly we are in favour of the process. It's just that we have some concerns, that's all.

Mr Gary Wilson: I apologize for missing the first part of your presentation. I've looked over your brief and I'm concerned to make sure you know that, as is mentioned in the legislation at a couple of points, both the private and public sector will be involved in training, and certainly the employers are going to have the final say about where they want to go for training. In fact, a lot of it will still be generated by the private sector and will not involve OTAB. OTAB involves only government-funded programs and not ones that are carried out in the private sector, other than, we would hope, some influence as far as the methods that are used, and working both ways, that OTAB would be aware of these programs so that it could learn from it what's effective and how to meet the needs. But certainly there is that occurring now, as you know.

I'm pleased to see—actually, I shouldn't say "pleased" to see—that you do raise the question of management and executive level of training. That seems to be the main focus of private sector training at the moment, according to Allan Taylor in a report that appeared recently, saying that only 30% of private companies train now, and among those programs most of them are directed at the executive level. So it is a question of getting it below to the front-line workers.

Mr Davies: There's no question there's a need for balance, and that's what we're after, just the balance. I'm encouraged to hear you say that, but this question of equal opportunity, the employer will have the final say; it doesn't actually say that in any of the documentation. Even reading between the lines, it doesn't even imply that, the way it's now structured.

Mr Gary Wilson: But OTAB is set up to coordinate the training that exists now, that the government sponsors and funds, so the fact is, there's still a lot of training going on in the private sector. Even among those programs the employer will be the one who is looking for the training and this is where it's seen, by including all the partners involved, that the employer will have access to the best variety of the best programs involving workers and

social equity groups. Then we see the best balance will be achieved.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): Mr Davies, you made an interesting comment when you said that small business is not tuned in to training. I wondered if you could elaborate on that statement because, recognizing that small business is the largest employer not only in our province but in Canada, it concerns me because from your background you must have a reason for saying that. Obviously, small business must have been doing a good job at training its employees because small business has been the most successful business we have.

Mr Davies: I think the hands of small business have been pretty full the last few years, just surviving and doing what it has to do to survive. But if they wish to broaden that perspective, ie, get into things like exporting, they need to get out into the world to find out what's going on. You could almost say that community colleges—in fact, all the suppliers—the private sector almost ignores small business in its marketing efforts because it's just not worth its while to go after it.

For example—and you probably know this—direct mail is one of the ways you reach targets. As you know, it's not cheap to mail in this country. Consequently, you tend to rent lists or develop your own lists of targets where you have the best chance of success. If you examine any of the large lists, probably 95% of them would be aimed at larger businesses, and so the small business would just be ignored. In that one area they're just not getting the exposure to training that the larger corporations are.

Also, let's not forget that if you're a medium or a large organization, you've got the resources to have a full-time human resource department. Small business doesn't have that. Inevitably, human resource development would come under the responsibility of, I suppose, one of the senior members of the company and they wear many hats—training is but one—whereas in a large corporation it's very easy to establish a department and really focus on human resource development. In small business it's just not going to happen. So those are a couple of the reasons why they get left out.

Mrs Marland: Okay. The other question I have is that you say in your brief you're speaking for the Ontario Society for Training and Development, which represents over 1,200 professionals. Can you tell me how your membership of over 1,200 professionals reviewed Bill 96?

Mr Davies: We have a newsletter which goes out to the full membership and we have been continually feeding them information about it. We've also had specific sessions set aside where we have briefed them on what is happening. In fact, we've had members of the Ontario government deliver presentations to give them a sense of what was coming to them.

Mrs Marland: What do you do? Do you have meetings in Toronto of your membership?

Mr Davies: Yes.

Mrs Marland: How many people would come to those meetings?

Mr Davies: The last meeting we had, I think 100 people turned out.

Mrs Marland: About 10%, then, of your membership.

Mr Davies: About 10%, yes.

Mrs Marland: Thank you.

Mr Davies: One of the factors, though, is that we've made every effort, of course, and we're satisfied by polling people in key segments of our membership, that they are in tune with what's happening, so we're happy that we reflect their viewpoint. But it's certainly true that, again in small business, they aren't aware of the impact OTAB will have on their operation.

1400

The Chair: Mr Davies, I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for your presence and participation here this afternoon. You have provided yet another unique insight on the part of one of the obviously affected bodies and we are grateful to you and to the Ontario Society for Training and Development. Not only have the committee members paid close attention to what you've had to say, but senior staff from the minister's office who are here with us and who listen carefully to presentations have noted your comments carefully. So we're grateful to you. You're welcome to stay or leave, as you wish. We're appreciative and we trust you'll advise your society accordingly.

Mr Davies: Okay. Thank you very much.

Mrs Marland: On a point of order, Mr Chairman: I enjoyed for a number of years being a member of a standing committee of this Legislature that was chaired by the then member for Nickel Belt, now the Treasurer of this province. In fact, I think at some time it was this same committee. We had a lot of experience travelling the province as a committee where the rules of the Legislature were enforced by Mr Laughren in the committee hearings.

Apparently, the rules of the Legislature do not permit any kinds of signs or demonstrations. So I'm asking you, as the Chairman, to ask that these balloons be removed from the committee. I'm not judging the content of what it is that they're saying. I wasn't here when they were presented. But I think it's totally inappropriate to have a bunch of balloons attached to one of our government members' chairs during a committee hearing.

The Chair: The clerk will please take those balloons and file them as an exhibit. They are part of the presentation from 11:30, the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition. Please try not to deflate them.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): We are challenging the staff today to really respond, aren't we?

The Chair: Ms Marland, you make an interesting point. You've put the clerk into one of the dilemmas that she's had to face this week. We'll see how well she copes with that. Her affection for you may be somewhat diminished as a result of it.

Oh no, please don't remove them. Place them with the rest of today's exhibits. Thank you. Here at the table. I suspect they, like most of us, will rise to the appropriate level. Some might call that the Peter principle.

JAN NABERT

The Chair: The next participant this afternoon is Custom Touch. Please come forward. Please tell us your name, your position, your organization. Tell us what you will. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for exchanges and dialogue.

Ms Jan Nabert: My name is Jan Nabert. I was asked to identify myself and the organization I represent. Therein lies my problem. I currently sit on 14 community organizations that are involved with training in one aspect or another. Add to this the factors that affect my personal makeup, and you have a very large melting pot.

I realize that you require some form of references. However, before I list them, I would like to state quite clearly that I am not speaking for any one viewpoint or for any one organization.

I am the owner of Custom Touch, which deals with construction and small manufacturing. I am the chairman of the Northumberland Information and Training Advisory Committee, which is one of the 57 CITCs in the province of Ontario. I am the interim representative for local board area 5 for the disabled. I sit on the interim steering committee for the Northumberland local board for the CITC. I sit on the interim steering committee for the Haliburton, Northumberland, Victoria and Peterborough local board in the capacity of business. I am a member of the Belleville-Hastings local board.

I am a member of the Equity Coalition for Peterborough and the Surrounding Area. I am a member of the Northumberland Industry Education Council. I am a member of the Lakeshore campus advisory council for Sir Sandford Fleming College; also a member of the Lakeshore continuous learning advisory committee for Durham College; also a member of Hamilton Township and Cobourg Citizens Coalition for Economic Action; also a member of Persons United for Self Help, PUSH, central Peterborough; also a member of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business; the Cobourg District Council, Scouts Canada; and I have a strong association with Northumberland Injured Workers.

The other factors affecting my personal makeup are as follows: I am a woman and a mother of four. I am disabled. I have gone through rehabilitation and training not once, but twice. I am a former farmer. I am a former member of a union and a former trainer for an employer. I am not a francophone, I am not an aboriginal and I am not a racial minority.

As you can plainly see, many of the hats I wear are not in agreement on the issues contained in Bill 96. At this point in time, I would imagine you have repeatedly heard the organizational viewpoints. You probably even know them off by heart. Hopefully, I will be able to show a more non-partisan view of some of the same concerns.

My initial intent was to identify myself as a community volunteer. However, volunteers will have a new definition under Bill 96. Currently, volunteers are not consistent. Some donate their own time with no monetary gain or loss, some actually suffer a monetary loss, while others have their time paid by their company or association. This in itself is viewed as a form of discrimination.

Only those individuals in the financial position to be a volunteer tend to be involved, not necessarily those best suited for the job. Equity does not only deal with gender, race, religion or disability.

The bottom line, however, is that a tremendous amount of training goes on in Ontario at little or no cost to the taxpayer. The proposal to give remuneration to members of the boards etc, while equitable, will add to the administration costs. Increased administration costs were a concern expressed time and time again at the local board consultations. All accepted the concept of restructuring to eliminate waste or duplication. Presumably, these cost savings will allow for expenditures in other areas. To the best of my knowledge, no figures have been made available to support the claims of no additional overall costs.

Another concern strongly expressed at both levels of consultation was the top-down control of policy, funding and appointments. The economy will recover from the bottom up, at different speeds with different requirements in each area. The need to respond quickly, under one year, will be severely hampered by a top-down approach. The closest comparison I can give is the principle of total quality management, getting away from the cumbersome bureaucracy of high-level management who possess little or no experience in the field.

This is not to say that there should not be a strong guiding hand at both levels. Minister Allen is fond of saying that the process is going to be labour-market-partner driven. That is all fine and good if they all have a licence. To carry the analogy further, some of the partners have Grand Prix expertise while others have not even registered for driver's education. This does not change the fact that everyone is out on the track at the same time. Can you honestly say there will be no accidents?

This may sound as if I am contradicting myself. However, I believe that there is a very real need for an arbitrator at both levels. Many of the partners are new to the program. There are still a great many more out in the communities that are uninformed but are expected to participate. Arbitrators would ensure that the local level is truly representative of that community and that the provincial level is representative of their councils and reference groups.

Local boards are supposed to be representative of their own community composition. This will be accomplished by joint designation with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, Employment and Immigration Canada and the Ontario government. Nowhere does the act specify this joint designation, nor is there any guarantee that OTAB will be representative of the provincial composition. Rather, we have references being made to the regulations on several occasions with no firm direction being given, only rumours and existing examples. This only serves to promote the historic confrontational roles of the partners.

I found it rather noticeable that a great deal of this bill dealt with the principles that should have been contained in equity legislation. This particular bill should have only given reference to that legislation. However, since that particular legislation now sits on the back burner, it had to be dealt with in Bill 96. Many people found this

ironic and are concerned that this back-door approach will be exhibited in other OTAB initiatives.

Many of the concerns will be dealt with when the regulations are released. However, a great many of us feel like Don Quixote tilting at the windmill. However, I am a firm believer in participation to effect change, and if people are not willing to participate, they have no right to complain about the outcome.

Thank you for allowing me this opportunity to participate.

1410

Mrs Marland: Are we going in rotation in terms of who has the first question, Mr Chair?

The Chair: Ms Marland, I didn't want to embarrass anybody. We will do it as we usually do it once there are enough people here to participate.

Mr Sutherland: Thank you for your presentation. Obviously, by your background and involvement in many different groups, you certainly would make a very qualified person to participate in the training process—local board process—and certainly bring a lot of diverse experience and that's great to see.

I should say that as to your paragraph about this being the equity bill, or putting this in through a back door, I want to disagree with that assessment. I want to disagree in that the government is still committed to bringing forward employment equity legislation, but equity principles are certainly incorporated into this legislation and the reasons are many. I think one of the presenters earlier today said it best: You can't have economic renewal without social justice, but you can't have social justice without economic renewal, and both principles need to be intertwined. The bill has tried to do that in a fashion with consensus and compromise.

That doesn't satisfy all groups, but that's really where it is trying to reflect the direction in dealing with both economic and equity issues at the same time, in the long run hoping that everyone will benefit from that.

My question to you then is: You've had a chance to look at the bill and participate in different ways. Do you think the bill is going to achieve some of the objects set out in it in the way it's designed, or do you have specific other suggestions as to maybe how you think the legislation could be improved?

Ms Nabert: No, I agree that you are going to accomplish something. The point is that a lot of time and effort and expense, shall we say, was put into the principles being incorporated in this bill, when really they should have been dealt with in another piece of legislation and then just referenced, the same way you do a crown corporation etc. These principles are what this government stands behind and they will apply to all legislation passed by the government. I think there was a lot of time and effort expended that really didn't need to be.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks very much for your presentation. Looking over the groups you're affiliated with, I don't know how you had time even to write this, but of course it reflects your experience, which shows you cover a lot of areas and are the very type of person

we'd like to be involved in this process because it does draw on the experience of people in all aspects of the training process.

However, I want to mention a couple of things. You imply that there will be remuneration, that people on local boards will be paid, but at this point there's no suggestion of that at all.

Ms Nabert: I suppose I should clarify that. I believe it's at the OTAB level that there will be remuneration for board members and council members—

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

Ms Nabert: —on these committees and that sort of thing. At the present time, most of the functions are being accomplished by volunteers at no cost.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's one of the major issues, of course. You say at that the present time these things are being accomplished, but the problem is how they're being accomplished and that there are concerns at all levels and in all areas about the kind of training being done in the province. That's what we're trying to do by bringing the major partners around one table so we can exchange information and reach, we think, better decisions based on that sharing of information.

Ms Nabert: I think, to be equitable, you have to. My concern is that there have been no figures to prove the funds will become available by saving someplace else. That's the real issue. You are going to be adding a phenomenal amount of administration costs in order to pay these people. Where is it going to come from? Have we proven there will be savings? We haven't seen those figures. That's my main point.

Mr Gary Wilson: Right. The figures: When we talk about the funding of OTAB, for instance, that's not going to require any new money because this money's already being spent on government training programs, but now is spread over a number of ministries in various programs. We think that will represent at least a more effective use of the money by coordinating it.

Ms Nabert: You just said it yourself: "We think."

Mr Gary Wilson: But we do know now that the training isn't working. We have everyone's admission of that. One of the major motivations for people coming around the table is that they recognize things have to change, especially in today's economic environment. So there is that willingness to try something that's different. Of course, we don't know whether it's going to work, but it does require goodwill and the strongest legislation possible to establish that.

Another thing then comes down to the directors who will be on the governing board. I think you have a concern that they won't be representative of Ontario's makeup. Are you aware that this is specifically referred to in the legislation in section 9? It talks about the directors and how they will be appointed with regard to the groups they're going to represent.

There will be consultation, and the appointment will come from the nominations, at least taking into account who the various participating groups nominate. Second,

they will represent the nature of Ontario's society, its diverse nature, the dual language feature and looking for a gender balance. So with those three features in mind and the consultation with the reference groups, it seems to me there's a lot of representation there, at least a strong attempt made to make sure the directors will be as representative of Ontario's population as possible.

Ms Nabert: Yes, I recognize that. However, social action was the initial word. I understand it's expanded to about 12 words now. Why should they not be the same number as business and labour? These are questions that are repeatedly asked of those of us involved in committees. Why are we not the same number as business and labour? If you look at the composition of Ontario by numbers alone, they should have equal representation to business and labour.

Mrs Marland: I really want to congratulate Ms Nabert. I think this is an impressive brief and I have to say I'm really impressed with your own background. I don't know very many people who are as involved as you are. You've got 14 or 15 organizations here that you're personally involved with, plus you run your own business in construction and small manufacturing. I can't help but think that your business, Custom Touch, must be very successful having your kind of leadership at the head of it.

I find that I agree with a lot of the comments you've brought forth, and I just had two questions. One was that you said at the very beginning, Jan, that you were asked to identify yourself and the organization you represented. Who asked you that when you asked to appear before the committee?

Ms Nabert: Initially, when I asked to appear, it was what category, what was I representing, what was my organization. The facts that I had sent requesting an opportunity to speak, I had actually run out of room on the paper, so I think it only had 10 listed on it. I think the major concern was that I became a very diverse person and there was a lot of concern about who I was going to speak for.

As I say, just looking at the list, you can tell. Certain aspects of the bill, if it's Monday, I agree with this one, and if it's Wednesday, I have to take a middle of the road approach. That's why I chose to try to speak more as an individual, why I was registered under my company name, so that (1) I wouldn't step on toes, and (2) if I say anything that offends anybody, it's me, it's not the organization that gets blamed.

Mrs Marland: But the background is why I'm impressed with what it is you're saying here, because a lot of the organizations you are involved with I recognize very well. I certainly know a lot about the work of PUSH. I notice that you're involved with injured workers. You're also involved with the CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. I can't imagine anybody who would have a broader base from which to look at Bill 96 and that's why I'm glad you're here.

You made quite an interesting statement about the equity aspect being slipped in here. I think your words are, "Maybe it's been slipped in here because that particular

legislation is now on the back burner." But then you go on to say, "Many people found this ironic and are concerned that this back-door approach will be exhibited in other OTAB initiatives." That, I think, is a very important statement that you're making, and I wonder if you could tell us what other back-door initiatives you're concerned might result.

1420

Ms Nabert: There's been a lot from organizational viewpoints about the political agenda. There's a lot of reference that's made to that; too much, I believe, in some cases. That's the back door they're afraid of, that some political things—I think the common terms most people use are payoffs, buyoffs, whatever you want, that they're appeasing the populace and so on. The concern has been expressed that this back-door approach might be used to slip through some additional payoffs, I guess, would be the simplest colloquialism that's used for it.

Equity legislation is a very important piece of legislation. I don't think it was given its just treatment by incorporating it this way. I think it needs to be dealt with in the focus of a full piece of legislation. I don't know if that answers your question or not.

Mrs Marland: Well, it does, but you already had mentioned equity legislation. I just wonder what else you had in mind, because you said there may be other things, other initiatives.

Ms Nabert: There have been a lot of rumours about the composition of, say, the labour representatives and where that's going to come from, although I have to be very honest: In Bill 96 it just states quite clearly that it will be eight members of labour. So going on that, I believe there will be eight members of labour. The rumours abound, of course, and they're stating that it will be heavier to one specific union.

Mrs Marland: Which one?

Ms Nabert: OFL.

Mrs Marland: Thank you very much.

Mr McGuinity: Thank you, Ms Nabert, for your presentation. You touched on something here that I find interesting. You make a recommendation that you express as, I guess, a certain attraction to having an arbitrator.

Ms Nabert: Yes.

Mr McGuinity: How would that person work?

Ms Nabert: I think the arbitrator would have to be responsible directly to the minister, or at least to the minister and the governing body. It has to be a voice that people feel they can go to when their representative is not representing them, or have the perception that the representative is not representing them. They have to feel that there is another avenue open to them.

You have a tremendous can of worms opening up with local boards and, "What is the composition of my community?" You are going to have a lot of people standing there saying: "Me too. I should have a seat and I want representation." They have to feel there is someone there who will say, "Yes or no, this community does have X percentage of racial minorities and therefore X percentage should

be represented at the local level." But they would have a separate function at the OTAB level, and that would be to see that the elected or appointed representatives are actually fulfilling the mandate of the organizations as well as the province.

Mr McGuinty: Right. So you're anticipating that there will be problems.

Ms Nabert: Yes.

Mr McGuinty: Particularly at the local level.

Ms Nabert: Yes.

Mr McGuinty: We're told that the local board makeup will mirror the central board in terms of numbers and groups it represents. I guess one of the concerns we have is that to impose this from on high will not do justice to the various characteristics associated with the particular community.

Ms Nabert: I think at the local level the arbitrator will have to work very closely with the nominees as well as report to the minister and to the governing body as a whole. There just has to be that feeling that somehow there is going to be the little voice heard. That's probably more so an issue in the outside communities, not so much in the metropolitan areas.

The Chair: Ms Nabert, the committee tells you it's grateful to you for coming forward and sharing your views with us. You have a diverse background and bring to this committee a wide range of experience and skills. We're appreciative of your willingness to share that, and we thank you.

Ms Nabert: Thank you.

The Chair: We trust that you will continue to keep in touch if you have new or other things to tell us. Thank you kindly.

ONTARIO ASSOCIATION OF YOUTH EMPLOYMENT CENTRES

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres. If those people are here, they can please come forward. Have a seat in front of a microphone. Tell us your names, your positions or titles, if any.

Ms Tina Gibbs: I'm Tina Gibbs.

The Chair: Welcome. And your colleague with you?

Ms Sherri Jackson: Sherri Jackson.

The Chair: There is coffee and other beverages for people here who are members of the public participating. It also happens to be one of the best-kept secrets in terms of free, good coffee here in the city of Toronto. I'm surprised that more people don't wander in on their way through Queen's Park or on their way about the building, because it's good and it's free; or not free, because it's obviously been paid for by the taxpayers of the province and they're welcome to it. Go ahead, people.

Ms Gibbs: Good afternoon. My name is Tina Gibbs. I am from the Georgian Bay area. I am the sole supporter of my family of five. I'm a youth member of the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres and actively

involved in a number of provincial projects, including the youth policy directions project of the association.

I am joining Sherri Jackson, the president of the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres, this afternoon to provide committee members with comments on Bill 96 from the perspective of young workers in this province. I appreciate and thank the committee for this opportunity.

This is an important opportunity for me. OTAB will fundamentally change the way training is designed and delivered in this province. It is very likely that I am the youngest person to address the committee on Bill 96. If this is true, I also have the distinction of being the presenter on whom OTAB will have the longest-term impact. I am just starting what could be over 40 years in the workforce. My entry, my critical initial experiences, my ongoing training and perhaps that of my three children are dependent upon what is contained in the 30 sections of Bill 96.

The problem: When I read the document, I don't see myself included. OTAB's purpose is to enable business and labour, together with educators, trainers and representatives of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, to play a significant role in the design and delivery of labour force development programs and services. The legislation says that it's going to enable me to be there and then fails to include me in section 9, where those who will participate in shaping the future training culture are named.

Ontarians like me, young Ontarians who form the basis of tomorrow's labour force, are presently underrepresented. Since 1989 youth participation in the labour force has decreased 9.2 percentage points to 50%. This is approximately three times the drop in participation rates for other workers. Youth are the last to be offered employment and the first to go. Young Ontarians lose their jobs three times more frequently than other workers. We are, as young Ontarians, experiencing an increasing pattern of short-term and part-time employment.

This dramatically low participation rate does not mean we are busy travelling to add to our life's experiences or engaged in other creative pursuits. We are leading an increasingly disadvantaged lifestyle. In the last 15 years there has been almost doubling of the incidence of poverty among families with children where the head of the household is 15 to 24 years of age, families like mine.

Section 9 should include youth representation. It doesn't. Not only is it exclusive to me today, but that exclusion is legislated into the future by the failure to permit flexibility. There is no mechanism to add additional directors representing underrepresented or disadvantaged groups in the future. In a piece of legislation that seeks to identify and eliminate systemic and other discriminating barriers, is this not creating systemic discrimination?

1430

I understand that in over 80% of the community consultations this exclusion was identified. This exclusion was the major focus point in all the decisions I participated in with other young Ontarians and youth advocates. The legislation must be amended to ensure that this exclusion is addressed.

Exclusion can be addressed within the proposed legislation without jeopardizing the implementation of OTAB.

It can be done without impeding implementation or infringing on the strength of OTAB leadership. It can be done while maintaining a meaningful role for all OTAB members. A line-by-line analysis will demonstrate this as well as address a number of the identified concerns, including accountability, funding, evaluation and the role of OTAB participants.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Good afternoon. I'm Sherri Jackson, president of the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres, a member-based organization comprised of the network of 70 youth employment centres, plus youth servicing organizations, youth advocates, youth and a provincial advisory committee representing over 800 community volunteers.

The association has been actively involved in discussions concerning the development of OTAB through its participation in the Ontario Training Education Action Coalition and membership on the OTAB education and training steering committee. These discussions, combined with our own internal consultation with members, have assisted in the development of our comments today.

OAYEC supports efforts to improve the way we train and retrain Ontario's workforce. We do have some concerns. These concerns focus on ensuring that the fundamental principles reflected in clause 1(a) are more consistently reflected throughout the legislation, specifically sections 4 and 9.

A more complete analysis of the sections and clauses I will refer to is contained in the report provided committee members. For this presentation, I am focusing on those which are imperative from the perspective of ensuring the effective delivery of training services to the youth of Ontario.

Paragraph 4(1)15: While this clause refers to the effective use of educational and training resources, we believe this could be strengthened by recognizing all the education training delivery networks represented within the OTAB project: community-based trainers, private trainers, school boards, colleges and universities.

Paragraph 4(1)16: This clause does not have a reference point in the purpose of Bill 96. We believe this clause contravenes the spirit of OTAB in two ways: first, by contravening the spirit of partnership by singling out public institutions from among all training delivery systems; second, by ensuring the strength of public institutions, OTAB's spirit of access and equity may be contravened.

In excess of one million Ontarians annually enrol and participate in training and education which is the most appropriate and accessible to them. It is not provided by the public education system. Paragraph 16 should be deleted or amended to include all educational institutions, with an additional amendment to section 1 to reflect this as a purpose of OTAB.

Paragraph 4(1)18: This paragraph should be amended as follows, "To recognize the diversity and pluralism of Ontario's population and seek to promote training appropriate to the needs of this population."

Subsection 9(2): This subsection creates an inflexible structure. The purpose of the act is to involve representatives

of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups in the design and delivery of labour force development programs and services. Given that demographic and economic shifts do occur, these groups may vary from time to time. We believe the present definition of such groups is already exclusive with respect to youth. As Tina has highlighted, this must not be legislated.

OTAB objects include "to seek to ensure access and equity," and "to identify and seek to eliminate systemic" and other discrimination. This subsection contravenes the spirit of these objects by creating a closed system that cannot accommodate a group for which OTAB has a purpose.

We recommend adding the word "minimum" to the statement. Any resulting concerns about the strength of OTAB's leadership can be addressed by the decision-making processes.

Subsection 12(2): The issue of accountability must be addressed before provincial councils or local boards are established. Objects of OTAB include words such as "promote," "support" and "link" with respect to access, equity and program design. It is necessary for accountability and the successful execution of such objects that guarantees be put into place to ensure public access to all meetings, reports and decision-making processes at both the provincial and local levels.

Subsection 15(2): Directors will be advising the government of Ontario on all aspects of labour force development, including its funding. Given that these directors are nominated by and in some cases directly employed by or in advisory relationships with training and education organizations utilizing allocated dollars, any conflict-of-interest guidelines must be developed to address organizational conflict of interest in addition to individual conflict-of-interest situations.

Subsection 20(1): The words "may be established" should be amended to "shall be established." Reference groups are integral components of proposed accountability processes. To make this subsection consistent with amended subsection 9(2) concerning "minimum" directors, the words "and others as appointed" should be added.

Subsection 20(2): A legislated commitment to fund the structural components responsible for assisting and ensuring OTAB carries out its objects is mandatory. Amend it to "OTAB shall fund" reference groups.

Clause 30(1)(b): The decision-making procedure used by the governing body must maintain a meaningful role for all labour market partners while demonstrating the leadership role of business and labour. We recommend that on any issue the board first endeavour to reach a consensus. Failing this, a triple-majority vote would confirm any motion. This would require a majority of business reps, five of eight; a majority of labour representatives, five of eight; plus at least 50% of the remaining labour market partners, three of five at this time.

This model would ensure that for all motions to be confirmed, the majority of business and labour representatives would have to support the motion, and the voting role of all partners would remain meaningful.

In addition, the leadership role of business and labour cannot be jeopardized or infringed regardless of the number of labour market partners involved. It accommodates future inclusiveness and acknowledges the respective role of all partners.

Clause 30(1)(i): To remain consistent with the purpose of OTAB and its spirit of access and equity, we recommend that "and others as identified or appointed" be added to the end of the clause.

Subsection 30(2): The development of regulations must be made in consultation with OTAB directors and reference groups. We recommend amending subsection (2) accordingly.

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity of meeting with you today. Both Tina and myself hope our voices have been clear and have spoken well on behalf of the over 80 member centres and service deliverers, the over 32,000 young Ontarians who access training services through these centres and the tens of thousands of young Ontarians using other employment support services. Tina, myself and Jean Foulds, our executive director of OAYEC, would be pleased to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

1440

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. Yours is a voice that maybe isn't heard enough, and I'm pleased to have your presentation here today. We've concentrated in the last few years on women's issues. We're really starting to look at employment equity issues, but we have not really looked at, I think, the growing crisis in youth employment.

In fact my leader has really started to get interested in that and has struck a working group within our caucus to start looking at this problem, because even for the young people who have received training and have university degrees, there seems to be no place to go. If you start to look at the youth unemployment figures, it is absolutely shocking, and we really have to start to address them.

I think you've been overlooked as a group in a way, maybe because you are us and we were you. But I think it's time that we recognized youth as a group and made sure that youth had a say in many of these organizations, especially something as vital as education and, in this case, training.

I thought your clause-by-clause analysis was very helpful. I would say that I will be incorporating most of your suggestions in amendments. I think you're right on. Others that I hadn't thought of, I will take a look at for sure. They've brought to my attention areas that I hadn't paid as much attention to as I maybe should have. But on your major ones I'm prepared to move amendments and have been working on them. I think they're very good ideas.

I'm very concerned, for instance, about the establishment of the local boards. For sure, it should not be just "may"; it shall be "shall." Regarding the funding of reference groups, I think you're right. For sure we have to be looking at the decision-making procedures. You don't set up an organization and then sort of let it fight it out as to how it's going to make decisions. We've seen some fail-

ures in the past with that and we need to set this out as clearly as we can.

I really appreciate your presentation today, and I'm finding it very helpful. I'd like to defer to my colleague. Does Mr McGuinty have any questions?

Mr McGuinty: I'm not sure if I had a question as much as a positive comment. I was particularly appreciative of your emphasis on the fact that we should be taking advantage of the opportunities that are available in both the private and public sectors in terms of education.

We've heard arguments made by representatives of each group. You could always criticize those groups for having vested interests; sometimes that criticism would stick and others it might not. It's good to have a perspective from somebody who is relatively impartial in this matter. Again, I think it's a responsible and mature approach which recognizes that each group has something to offer, and it would be foolhardy not to recognize that. Thank you.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Thank you.

Mrs Marland: I'm familiar with some of the youth employment services, because we have some in Peel obviously, and particularly in Mississauga. But I'm never sure when someone speaks on behalf of, as you are, the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres, if people ask you the age of youth what your answer is.

Ms Sherri Jackson: My answer would be ages 16 to 24. We look at youth as being up to age 29 if they have any sort of disability or handicap.

Mrs Marland: Good. When you're outlining your concerns on page 1 of your brief, you make a number of very important statements. In my opinion, they're very important. Particularly, you say, "The legislation does not adequately deal with the issue of accountability." That's a major statement.

The one that follows it is even more major, because on that point the whole purpose either stands or falls. You talk about the fact that "Funding for the proposed OTAB structure has not been addressed."

Ms Sherri Jackson: We believe youth have really been missed through the whole process. Many of our centres did participate when the travelling team was going around, and we made our concerns known there as well. We didn't see anything come back that represented what we as a group have been saying through the whole process.

Youth will be our future, and if we don't take care of it now, we're going to pay for it later, whether it be through the welfare system, through mother's allowance or whatever. We feel it's a major oversight on behalf of OTAB.

Mrs Marland: Or paying for it now. When you mention the road show, did you have a number of meetings with—who were the people you met with? Were they ministry officials, or do you remember?

Ms Sherri Jackson: The team that did the consultation, that travelled around the province?

Mrs Marland: Yes.

Ms Sherri Jackson: I would say that probably three quarters of our directors met and did presentations on behalf of youth to that team.

Mrs Marland: Do you recall if the team were people from the ministry, or were they consultants?

Ms Sherri Jackson: Actually, they were appointed members on that team.

Mrs Marland: So they were probably consultants the ministry had hired.

Ms Sherri Jackson: No. We did have an education rep on that committee who travelled around and it came through us. As community-based trainers, we had a vote on who would represent us there.

Mrs Marland: Oh, I see.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Theresa Gonzales represented the education stream, so we did have some input as to who would be there, for sure. But it appears that once the final documents came out around the consultation process a lot of our concerns were not there. A lot of the things we had said were not in the consultation paper.

Mrs Marland: So you feel quite a level of frustration, having invested that time and effort and then to see it totally ignored.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Very, yes.

Mr Sutherland: I want to just get clear in terms of how the youth employment centres operate funding etc. You've referred to yourself as a community-based organization and I just want to try to—because we've had several groups come in and try and define the difference between the public institutions versus community-based. Do all the youth centres operate basically the same way, funded the same way?

Ms Sherri Jackson: No, we're not all the same. Some of us are operated by a volunteer board of directors. Some are sponsored by other agencies: the John Howard Society, for example, the YMCA, mental health agencies. A lot of our funding is provincial funding. As well, we take in federal funding. Youth employment counselling centres offer a wide variety of services. A lot of us are not just employment. We look at housing; we look at drug and alcohol abuse; we look at the global picture of the young person who comes through the door.

Mr Sutherland: So you're pretty broad-based organizations in general.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Yes.

Mr Sutherland: You mentioned that you didn't feel the input you'd given was incorporated in there. Other than the input I assume you gave in terms of ensuring youth had a seat on the board, what other types of things was the organization presenting that maybe you feel have not been reflected so far in the development of OTAB?

Ms Sherri Jackson: The same things, really, that we have run through here today.

Mr Gary Wilson: Can I ask a question?

The Chair: Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks very much for your presentation. You've certainly given us a lot of concrete material

to consider. I am concerned, though. Under your executive summary, I'm not sure you supported within the rest of the document some of the contentions here.

For instance, "The legislation has been drafted in isolation from a comprehensive provincial policy on labour force development." I'm not quite sure how you would produce that or who you'd expect to produce it, given that part of the process involved in OTAB is actually to bring the people together who are involved in training, who need training and, I would think, to develop this very comprehensive policy you're talking about.

To try to do it otherwise would risk leaving out a group, one of the labour-market partners, in effect, and then risk the success of any kind of training program in the future, or training process.

Ms Sherri Jackson: I'm sorry, Mr Wilson. I'm not really clear on what you're asking me.

Mr Gary Wilson: Who do you expect this comprehensive provincial policy on labour force development to come from? Whom do you expect to develop it?

Ms Sherri Jackson: Actually, we're not here to talk about the development. We're very supportive of OTAB and what it is you're trying to do totally, so I wouldn't want to leave you with the feeling that we're not. Our concern is that youth are not represented in the OTAB structure and we feel there needs to be a place there for our young people.

Mr Gary Wilson: All right then—

Ms Sherri Jackson: We'd like to see them actually be named one of the disadvantaged groups.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay. Again, how would you then select the member for youth, who would be the representative in effect? Of course, there are young people who are working. In fact, we already have heard from other young people in different categories, say, and this is one of the difficulties: How do you separate youth from the various activities they're involved in, student and employed, unemployed and other factors? Have you thought about that, how you would actually arrive at a representative of youth? You actually raised the question of accountability, so I guess you have thought about it.

1450

Ms Sherri Jackson: Would you like to try that one, Tina?

Ms Gibbs: There is a project, as I stated at the start of what I said, the youth policy directions project, which we intend to act as the liaison between the youth themselves, the population that is seeking the training, and our government or OTAB to help in the policy changes that would suit the needs of the youth. Exactly how we would go about designating the youth member to be on the director's board hasn't been discussed up to this point in time.

Mr Gary Wilson: You know too that each of the representatives on the governing body will have a reference group to advise them about training issues and that there is a place there for young people on the range of reference groups. Do you see that as one way young people can be involved in the deliberation on training?

Ms Sherri Jackson: We see that as a positive step, but advisory is very different than a director; an advisory role is a very different role than a director's role.

Mr Gary Wilson: You see that also working at the community level so that there is the opportunity to be involved at both levels, both provincial and community?

Ms Sherri Jackson: We believe there should be youth representatives at both levels, in the community as well as here at the OTAB.

Mr Gary Wilson: You mentioned accountability again in the executive summary. Is that the kind of accountability you meant? I just want to be clear about that, because the legislation lists the accountability that OTAB has to operate under in several different places; that is, accountable to the minister, accountable to the reference groups in effect, or the labour market partners, but very definitely accountable to government through having to come up with multi-year plans as well as annual reports, audited reports, and then the minister's directives that they are subject to. Is that the kind of accountability you had in mind or was there something else?

Ms Sherri Jackson: No, we're quite comfortable with that.

Mr Gary Wilson: Do you find, then, that that's still not adequate, though, that you'd like to see some other kind of accountability built in there?

Ms Sherri Jackson: We would like to see some measures, as we've highlighted here, put in to ensure that there is accountability to the OTAB team.

Mr Gary Wilson: To the OTAB team?

Ms Sherri Jackson: To the government body.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay. On the funding that you mentioned here as well, saying that has not been addressed, in fact, the funding OTAB will operate under is going to be the money that is now being used to fund some 40 programs spread throughout 10 ministries. By pulling that together, that money will be available for the operation of OTAB. That's where the money will come from. What point were you addressing there?

Ms Sherri Jackson: Where are you speaking from?

Mr Gary Wilson: From your executive summary. You just say "funding for the proposed OTAB structure."

Ms Sherri Jackson: You're in a different place than I am.

Ms Gibbs: I believe that is at the end of mine, where I have spoken of including accountability, funding evaluation and the role of OTAB participants. There needs to be funding for the middle step, between the grass roots and the OTAB, in order to get the needs of the youth for their education, their training and anything that helps them get that training to be productive in our society. They start as youth, but we all grow into adults, and to be productive adults, we must have a good, educated work experience, which many don't have the opportunity to get.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay, I understand, yes. So actually the range of institutions we have to meet the training needs of youth will be used, and where it's not working,

there will be that, I guess, interplay between the people who need it and the providers. This is what both OTAB and the local boards provide, as far as a clearinghouse for information is concerned, to make sure that these programs are being provided and that they are serving the purpose. The money that will be needed will then be found to make sure the programs are provided.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Yes. Under the present model, community-based trainers are not sitting at the table now. We're part of the education stream.

Mr Gary Wilson: No, they are. Community-based trainers are part of the—

Ms Sherri Jackson: Part of the education stream.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, that's right. They do have access, being one of the labour market partners with access to one of the two directors.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Right, but we would like to see that all five of the training partners be represented at that table.

Mr Gary Wilson: This is what you meant by the minimum of 22.

Ms Sherri Jackson: Right.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, we've heard from a number of groups that would like to see that raised.

Ms Sherri Jackson: I'm sure.

Mr Gary Wilson: This has been a very collaborative, cooperative approach, and the 22 has been arrived at after long discussion, but that's not to say these things are carved in stone. It's meant to be a very sensitive and responsive kind of operation that will listen to the needs of the community and then adjust accordingly.

But we think that, based on the kinds of nominees by the labour market partners, that could include youth—they are being asked to remember the makeup of Ontario's society—as well as the reference groups that will then have access to the directors and the community groups themselves that will be reflective of the makeup of the community. We think we have in place here a very sensitive and responsive system that by meeting the needs of the people who need the training and provide it, will serve the purpose.

Finally, it's a political system too. You have access to your political representatives to make sure that the system is accountable in the way you mean, that it is serving the needs of all our community members. You look convinced.

Mrs Marland: I am confused.

Mr Gary Wilson: Maybe if you'd come here more often, Margaret, you'd be able to follow these things.

Mrs Marland: I'm trying to understand and I'm trying to follow you. I think the deputation's trying to follow you too.

The Chair: Did you want to respond to the suggestion that you look convinced?

Mr Gary Wilson: She's taking their time, Mr Chairman.

Ms Gibbs: Might I ask, in what you have said about the 22 directors that have been designated, as outlined in

Bill 96, are we assuming that youth are already accounted for? Is this what you've been saying, that they're automatically already accounted for?

Mr Gary Wilson: The fact is that the directors are going to represent the groups, the labour market partners. They'll be nominated by them and then the government makes the final appointment. But the nominators have been asked to remember that they are nominating people to represent not only their groups but the wider public interest; in other words, the diversity of all of Ontario.

The Chair: You can ask that question again if you want.

Mrs Marland: Yes, why don't you ask that question again, because he might get it?

Ms Gibbs: Am I to understand that with the outline of 22 directors in OTAB, we are assuming that the youth are already accounted for by not having a seat as a youth director on your OTAB?

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said at the beginning, youth are represented among all the labour market partners; that is, there are young business people, young workers, young women, young people with disabilities. In that sense they are certainly going to be represented. We have had trouble identifying youth as a category without the other attributes.

To that extent young people are going to be represented, but the other point is that as far as the directors go, there is the obligation to act in the public interest. Certainly, the needs of young people are very much part of the public interest and will be addressed that way. There's a combination and we expect that there is the possibility, because young people are represented in all these groups, that they will be among the nominees.

But certainly there are the reference groups too. I think you've agreed too that there has to be a limit on the number of people who are around the table for it to be workable. These people are going to be advised by reference groups. That spreads out the influence and the participation. Then there are the community groups as well.

The Chair: I don't know whether Mr Sutherland's going to constitute the cavalry, but before he speaks, you can respond to Mr Wilson.

Ms Sherri Jackson: We would like to see it legislated that there has to be a youth representative sitting at the OTAB.

1500

Mr Sutherland: I'm going to pick up on Mr Wilson's point that not everyone will be at the table, but of course there's more than one mechanism of actually being on the actual board for having input in terms of the reference councils, the entry and re-entry councils and many opportunities for many groups, a much broader base of groups to participate at that level as well.

The Chair: All of that having been said, do you want to finish off?

Ms Sherri Jackson: Thank you very much.

The Chair: You have provided an interesting perspective to this whole discussion and debate. You have made a most valuable contribution and both of you, Ms Gibbs and Ms Jackson, on behalf of the Ontario Association of Youth

Employment Centres, have played an important role in this committee's work. We trust that when you return to your association, you will express our gratitude to it for sending you here today. We hope you'll keep in touch either individually or collectively with the committee. Thank you, people, and take care.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF AGRICULTURE ONTARIO AGRICULTURAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

The Chair: The next participant this afternoon is the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, if their spokespeople will please come up, have a seat and tell us their names, titles and positions, if any. How are you, sir?

Mr Carl Sulliman: Happy Valentine's Day.

The Chair: Well, bless you. Believe it or not, I didn't get a whole lot of valentines around here this year.

Mr Carl Sulliman: I wouldn't bring chocolates because they're not good for you. The Heart and Stroke Foundation wouldn't let us bring chocolates.

The Chair: Please tell us your names, your positions and proceed with your comments. We've got your written material, which will form part of the record by virtue of being filed as an exhibit.

Mr Bill Weaver: Mr Chairman, my name is Bill Weaver. I'm second vice-president of OFA. I'm a farmer from Kent county. With me are Tony Morris, executive member from OFA, also on the board of directors of the Ontario Agricultural Training Institute, and Carl Sulliman. Carl decides which hat to wear at which appropriate time. He's here as chief executive officer of OFA and of OATI, and Carl also served on the minister's advisory committee on the OTAB project under Dr Allen. With me also is Cathie Lowry, executive director of the Ontario Agricultural Training Institute.

Mrs Marland: But you meant to introduce her first, right?

Mr Weaver: Well, there's protocol.

The Chair: Go ahead, sir. Don't let these people side-track you.

Mr Weaver: We intend to use the half-hour, Mr Chairman and members of the committee. The OFA and OATI briefs are separate. We intend to put forth our OFA brief for the first 15 minutes and any questions answered in that period of time, and then turn it over and Tony will be presenting the OATI brief at 15 minutes after the hour, approximately.

If we could start on page 1 of the OFA brief, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture welcomes the opportunity to present its views to the standing committee on resources development on Bill 96. An act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

OFA is the voice of Ontario farmers. Supported by 20,000 individual members and 26 affiliated organizations, the OFA represents farm family concerns to government and the general public. Constituted in its present form since 1970, the organization has a long history of advocating in the interests of Ontario's farm community and traces its roots to the Ontario Chamber of Agriculture, established in

the 1930s. Active at the local level through 47 county and regional federations, the OFA is a member of the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the farmer's voice on national affairs.

The farmers of Ontario have many concerns regarding the establishment of OTAB. One source of concern stems from the apparent confusion regarding the training role of the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food in the agricultural workplace. Other concerns relate to the content of the legislation and to the regulations and procedures of operation which will be established after the bill achieves royal assent. Our presentation will comment on these concerns and provide recommendations.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Food funds agricultural education initiatives, provides funding for research and performs extension services to disseminate new information on production and management techniques. Recently, OMAF has become involved in agricultural apprenticeship ventures.

Past discussion with the Ministry of Skills Development indicated its belief that OMAF looked after the skill training needs of agriculture. OMAF has indicated to us that it does not have the mandate to provide skill training. OMAF's education and extension role does not equate to skill training in the workplace. The mandate of OTAB therefore should, or rather must, not exclude the skill training needs of the agrifood industry's 629,000 workers and worker-owners.

The purpose clause of the act leads to some confusion with respect to the overall jurisdiction that OTAB will have. Clause 1(b) and paragraph 4(1)5 suggest that the purpose and objective of the act is to "lead to the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation and the timeliness and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers." "Workers and potential workers" tends to suggest all residents of the province of Ontario. Are these clauses meant to imply that OTAB will provide funding to promote equity adjustment? This will further exacerbate the current tension that exists between the retooling of Ontario's economy and providing social survival skills to all of Ontario's residents.

A further problem with the phrasing "workers and potential workers" is that agricultural business still does not have a clear signal as to where we fit. Most farmers or agriculture business employees are self-employed or worker-owners. How and where do worker-owners fit into OTAB's mandate for workers and potential workers?

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture recommends that part of clause 1(b) and paragraph 4(1)5, "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers," be deleted or changed to more clearly define the purpose of OTAB, to promote wealth creation for the citizens of Ontario.

To the end that OTAB is to provide the best skill training in the workplace, OFA is concerned with paragraph 4(1)16, whereby OTAB is "to ensure...the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems." Various provincial ministries provide funding to educational institutions. Is it the intention that OTAB become another source of funding for education, or is OTAB to provide skill training in the workplace?

The Ontario Federation of Agriculture recommends that reference to providing funding to publicly funded educational institutions be deleted.

Just in the best use of time, Mr Chair, I'll finish up our presentation by going through the headings, our recommendations and then dealing with any questions.

The next section is our concern regarding representation on the governing body. Why not have an eighth minority group representative to ensure that agriculture has at least one seat on the board to represent the province's second-largest employer? For that reason, the OFA recommends that OTAB's governing board of directors be expanded to include one agricultural appointment.

Regarding local training and adjustment boards, councils and reference committees, the OFA recommends that the local training boards, councils and reference committees have sufficient powers defined in the act, enabling them to provide local skill training needs.

On regulations, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture recommends that the decision-making authority for OTAB's governing board of directors be prescribed in the act.

On the sectoral training council, the Ontario Federation of Agriculture recommends that the act recognize sectoral groups to address the issues of particular training needs to specific industries within the province.

In closing, the OFA is pleased that the Ontario government is addressing the training and adjustment needs of the workers of this province. OFA can't stress enough, however, that OTAB's definition of workers must include agriculture's worker-owners and that this must be reflected in the legislation, governing body and the regulations of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. Thank you.

1510

The Vice-Chair (Mr Bob Huget): Thank you very much. If there's agreement with the committee, we'll move to the next presentation and then go back to questions for both.

Mr Tony Morris: That would be fine, Mr Chairman. My name is Tony Morris. I'm a director with the Ontario Agricultural Training Institute, usually referred to as OATI. You've already met the rest of the people who are on the delegation today.

OATI is a not-for-profit corporation and was formed in 1989 by the farmers of Ontario, agribusiness, the public sector and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture to address the distinct needs of agriculture and training. We are grass-roots-driven and we provide small-group, hands-on, interactive training opportunities to our clients, the farmers of this province. Our programs are driven by the agricultural community, reflect the needs of a distinct circumstance and are tailored specifically to our industry.

The mission statement of OATI is to enable Ontario farmers to enhance their skills to manage a changing agricultural workplace through self-determined programs. Therefore, we have a strong interest in the development of OTAB and its work to develop the skills of all Ontario residents so they can contribute to a competitive economy.

OATI has several concerns regarding OTAB, some of which relate to the contents of Bill 96 itself, while others relate to the regulations and operating procedures which will be developed after Bill 96 passes third reading.

First, if I may, I will focus on Bill 96 itself and then will speak about additional matters of importance to OATI.

Purpose clause of Bill 96: The Premier's Council paper entitled *People and Skills in the New Global Economy* and the consultation paper issued by the government of the day entitled *Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership for Ontario* both indicate the importance of job creation and training for a competitive economy and the desire for OTAB to be a less complicated mechanism for delivery of such training. However, the breadth of the purpose clause gives OTAB an unfocused mandate. OTAB should be focused on training for workplace skills and economic development rather than on all aspects of individuals' life.

OATI recommends that clause 1(b) and paragraph 4(1)5 be modified by either deleting the phrase "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" or adding the phrase "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals." As well, we would recommend a new initial component of the purpose clause should state that the purpose of OTAB is "to recognize the need for a competitive Ontario workforce that would form the basis for both wealth and job creation."

Under section 4 of Bill 96, we see Bill 96 as a bill to develop the skills of Ontario residents, to enable them to participate in the workplace and contribute to the province's economic health. Various ministries within the government of Ontario have other responsibilities to the people of the province. Of them, the Ministry of Community and Social Services offers programs to ensure access to the basic necessities of life, and the Ministry of Education and Training provides public educational institutions.

OTAB should be focusing on the provision of the best skills training to assist full participation in the workplace. To that end, OTAB must access whatever training will achieve the objectives most effectively and efficiently. It may consider workplace training programs offered by public institutions but should not have any responsibility to maintain the province's publicly funded education system. Therefore, OATI recommend the deletion of paragraph 4(1)16 from Bill 96.

It is difficult for any individual who will be appointed to a new organization such as OTAB to accurately gauge the demands of being co-chair of such a group. The directors may find that the originally suggested co-chair is just not the best director for the job. Therefore, OATI recommends that paragraphs 9(2)1, 9(2)2 and 9(2)3 be combined to read: "Eight directors representing business, one of whom shall be co-chair. Eight directors representing labour, one of whom shall be co-chair."

The majority of workers in Ontario are not unionized, and OATI is very concerned that the current intent is for all labour representatives to be nominated by organized unions. This is very worrisome to us, considering the agri-food industry is the second-largest employer in Ontario and that many of the businesses are owner-operated. It is unlikely that there would be satisfactory representation for

our industry in any of the currently proposed director categories. The Ministry of Agriculture and Food provides many excellent services to the agricultural industry, but its mandate does not include skills training and upgrading. Therefore, OTAB is an integral initiative for Ontario's agricultural workplace. Therefore, OATI recommends that paragraph 9(2)9 be added as "One director representing agriculture."

The importance of local people having significant and sufficient input into the training and adjustment process cannot be emphasized enough. This has to happen in their communities. Bill 96 indicates that local boards will exist, but it does not guarantee that these local boards will have any power. At the minimum, the local communities should be able to determine who will sit on the local board within the guidelines provided by the bill or the regulations. Again, considering the majority of Ontario workers are non-unionized, local boards must include non-union worker representatives. OATI recommends that subsection 18(2) be expanded to include: "It is the intent that local boards be empowered to make decisions that are best determined at the local level."

In the document *Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership for Ontario* it is explained that within the Workplace and Sectoral Training Council there will be sectoral groups. However, in Bill 96 there is not one reference to this. OATI cannot stress strongly enough how critical it is to the entire agricultural industry—I would remind you again, the second-largest industry in Ontario—that there be an agricultural sectoral representation, a very strong sectoral group. Yes, in certain areas we are a comparatively small player within some of the proposed local boards, but in certain proposed local board areas we are by far the majority. This group would address the numerous issues which are far more similar among the farmers across the entire province than between businesses within the local community.

A case in point is the fact that OATI was conceived and created to address the management and skills training needs of all Ontario farmers. We appreciate that agricultural knowledge among people involved in other businesses of the province is much less the norm than a few decades ago. Since the Second World War there has been an ever-widening gap between rural people and the people involved in manufacturing and other prime industries. The agricultural voice had become lost and the uniqueness of agricultural training needs was lost with it. Agriculture knows what it needs, just as other industries do. It was somewhat akin to fitting the proverbial round peg into a square hole to expect generic training programs to adequately meet the training of agricultural workers.

OATI recommends that between subsection 19(5) and subsection 20(1) the following be inserted: "There will be sectoral groups reporting to the councils to address issues of particular interest to specific industries within the province."

In summary, the Ontario Agricultural Training Institute is pleased to see the government of Ontario address the need for training and adjustment for workers in the province. However, we wish to ensure that OTAB's focus is on training for a competitive workplace, that the directors fairly

represent the full Ontario workforce and that local boards have appropriate powers. Most important, especially in the agricultural sector, is that sectoral interests of integral industries, such as agriculture, be specifically addressed within the system.

If I may, Mr Chairman, I would refer you to page 7, which is an outline summary of recommendations by OATI.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. Questions? Ms Marland.

Mrs Marland: In looking at the third recommendation of the OFA, where you are saying OTAB's governing board of directors be expanded to include one agricultural appointment, speaking as someone who did grow up on a farm, I can understand the special needs of addressing the work of people who work in farming. I have difficulty with OTAB to start with, so of course that's no surprise to you. But I think some of your recommendations point out that OTAB isn't the answer, isn't the solution.

1520

I want to play the devil's advocate with you here a little bit, not that I'm questioning the necessity for an agricultural appointment, because I agree with it. As I said, I understand what's different about that form of employment compared to a whole lot of other forms of employment. But I'm wondering where we stop—not we, because we wouldn't be part of it in the first place—but where the government would stop with including special representatives.

The group before you this afternoon—I don't know if you heard it—wanted youth to be directly represented on the board. I'm wondering, having spent a year travelling this province with a legislative committee and going into 17 mines, why it wouldn't be necessary to have a special appointment of a representative from that industry alone, people who mine and work underground.

There are so many areas that are so totally different from anybody else's job and work environment that it may be necessary, instead of having this present structure of labour and management, to indeed go into special appointments. I'm just wondering, in supporting your suggestion, which I support, how you would answer the question, "Where do we stop?" If the government says no to you, and I guess, Mr Sullivan, you've been pretty close to the government—

Mr Sullivan: That's a scary thought. You obviously don't know my background, Margaret. You tell Bob that, all right?

Mrs Marland: I didn't finish my sentence.

Mr Sullivan: Somebody lift David off the floor.

Mrs Marland: You said that you had been involved in the meetings—what did you say?—as a representative.

Mr Sullivan: Apparently, yes.

Mrs Marland: So I'm only taking what you said, and I'm thinking, if you couldn't convince them on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, who could?

What would you say to our delightful socialist government when it says, "But we can't have a representative of youth and we can't have a particular representative of the

Ontario Federation of Agriculture because of those eight representatives of unions"—of labour, pardon me; a Freudian slip. "There's going to be input from all of these other employee groups."

That was the answer we got a few minutes ago from our government members, trying to explain it to the people who wanted a youth representative. I'd like to know how you would manage that.

Mr Sullivan: With great respect, the member asks, "Where does it end?" I guess the question that we ask on behalf of the second-largest sector of the Ontario economy today is, "Where does it begin?" The OTAB project has been on the books for some time. Its precursor was Premier Peterson's round table on the economy and people in the workplace, and now it follows through.

The issue for us is that it's time to get on with it. The main message for us today is that the government, in its zeal to correct certain issues and address certain difficulties that confront the Ontario economy and Ontario society, may be slightly overambitious in its vision of OTAB, and it ought to confine its purpose to the workplace and the competitiveness of our economy in the global trading environment.

To that end, I think it would be remiss of the government and of all members of the House and particularly of this committee if you didn't pay serious heed to how integral the second most important segment of this economy is. What are you going to do with the people in agriculture, agribusiness and the small municipalities of this province if this sector of the economy fails because OTAB does not address its needs and it's not seen as a serious partner around the table?

It's critical. You have no other safety nets for them. There is no other place. This is what these people do. It is both livelihood and lifestyle for many people and it is a workplace. The romantic, stereotypical images of farming have got to be put behind you once and for all. That's the main message. It's a business.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. Mr Sutherland.

Mrs Marland: Excuse me, Mr Chairman.

The Vice-Chair: Your time has expired. I'm sorry. Mr Sutherland, go ahead.

Mr Sutherland: Thanks for coming in today and making a presentation from both organizations. Both of you talked about sectoral training councils, and the legislation does allow for the establishment of them in terms of section 19 of the legislation. You also talked about—particularly I'm referring to the OFA one, but I believe it was in both of them—under paragraph 4(1)16, the support for publicly funded institutions and the strength of them.

I find it hard to believe that the good farmers in Dover township and Hay township and Zorra township do not support the idea that government institutions help maintain those other government or public institutions—school boards are a sector—given the amount of money and investment the agricultural sector, through the taxes that have been paid, has put into those areas.

I just want to know where the basis for the deletion of that paragraph comes in, given the fact that it is a complementary one to the paragraph before, paragraph 4(1)15,

which says to use the diverse training resources of the province. I'm just wondering where the basis of that was coming from.

Mr Sulliman: Do you have an answer?

Mr Weaver: Yes. I think there are two concerns, and then we'll let Carl and/or Cathie expand on them.

The first concern is the purposes of OTAB. Should the primary purpose of OTAB be, as stated, to essentially support publicly funded educational institutions or should that be deleted and left open for what are publicly funded, private organizations that may be out there delivering training needs to agriculture or any other sector of the economy? By having that paragraph in there, then you have the concern that if that's a primary direction within OTAB, it may act as an exclusion against other modes of change. I think that would be particularly important within the agricultural sector.

Mr Sulliman: I think we should be straight about that. If the issue is that one of the ministries of the government and one of the enterprises of the government is underfunded, then it's the responsibility of the government to fund that agency accordingly and not use OTAB to top up something that's being underfunded and under a desk somewhere else. Mr Sutherland. I think that's the issue we have to be very concerned about here.

Mr Sutherland: But that's not the intent.

Mr Sulliman: There's also a perception problem around.

Mr Sutherland: As I say, paragraphs 15 and 16 are meant to be complementary, not in isolation.

Mr Sulliman: Catherine, do you want to add something to this, please?

Ms Cathie Lowry: Paragraph 15 covers the fact that both public and private should be considered by OTAB. Paragraph 16 can be read to say that public should have preference, and if the public organizations are providing better training, OTAB will give them funding. If they are not providing better training, they should not get the work.

Mr Ramsay: I think it's interesting that delegation after delegation—this is one example—have been fairly consistent with some of the points they've brought forward. It's not like this is the first group that's perceived this from this legislation. Many groups with various backgrounds have come up with this, but of course the government doesn't want to argue with everybody. We're here to listen to you. I agree and I'm prepared to take it out.

If you think you fall through the cracks between the ministries of Agriculture and Food and Skills Development when it comes to training, don't hold your breath for OTAB, because you're not at the party at all here at OTAB. The answer to Margaret's question of why every group—I almost feel like I want to move an amendment that every sector, every type of worker gets to be represented on this because people are angry because you've excluded so many people.

If you had left it as a general representation of workers in Ontario, you wouldn't have every group pounding at the door saying, "I want to be in." You've minimized it to such

a small group of people, because basically farmers don't count; they're not important because of course they're not unionized. That's why you don't count here. You don't have a seat.

1530

Now here's an organization—because you always make the argument—a democratic organization that represents at least 20,000 farmers, voluntarily, by the way. They've paid their \$150. These people could nominate somebody and that person would be responsible to the OFA. They would be responsible. There's one example right there of how you could get somebody. That's what this group is asking for. They're asking for a place at the table, but it's so exclusive and not inclusive and that's why groups are angry. I wish the government members would see that.

I really thank you for your presentation, especially the format where you've got nice summaries of your recommendations. It's going to make it very easy for me for working on amendments. I agree with these. I wish you well. Agriculture is a very important part of the economy of Ontario, and I'm glad you're here and speaking up on behalf of farmers.

Mrs Marland: Can I have some of your time, David?

The Vice-Chair: You may wish to respond to that very briefly.

Mr Sulliman: In summary, it is the responsibility of the men and women elected to the Legislative Assembly to put through the enabling legislation for OTAB. You will hear a parade of people who will come with their special pleas, their wish lists, what they would like from you, what they would like from the Legislative Assembly.

All I am asking you as responsible members of Parliament to do is to remember how integral this industry is, and the infrastructure and the backbone we provide to all of those rural municipalities outside of urban Ontario. As we prosper and as we are able to retool for an increasingly competitive world and an increasingly competitive workplace, so Ontario will prosper.

I think we are part of the solution for you if you will be partners in that prosperity with us and take our sector seriously. That's the invitation to you. It's a constructive and cooperative attitude we have, but you must take us seriously. You can no longer marginalize the second most important sector of the economy.

The Vice-Chair: I'd like to thank the Ontario Federation of Agriculture and the Ontario Agricultural Training Institute and each of you for coming forward today and so effectively putting forward the views of the organizations you represent. I'm sure that this committee will take your testimony here at the committee very seriously, and I think has listened, by and large, very carefully to the things you've had to say. Thank you very much for appearing here today.

Mrs Marland: I would just like to place on the record—I was interrupted before—on a point of privilege, the fact that in my questions to the Ontario Federation of Agriculture I was definitely supporting its position. I agree with them wholeheartedly. My question to them was, how

can they help us to make the argument to the government when all of these other constituent groups are coming, as they heard the group even before them this afternoon?

My concern is not in the quality of their argument, but I felt that when you interrupted my question, it was just slightly unfair, Mr Chairman, because the point was lost in supporting this particular deputation and asking for its help to convince the government to recognize the second-largest employer in this province.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you for that clarification, Mrs Marland. Unfortunately, as you know, we are bound by schedule and that schedule is getting farther and farther behind, but we appreciate your point of view. We would only hope that the time doesn't come off the next group, which is patiently waiting to appear before the committee. Thank you very much.

NISHNAWBE-ASKI NATION

The Vice-Chair: The next witnesses are the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, if they could come forward, please, and identify themselves.

Mrs Marland: What time is it? I have 3:32 pm.

The Vice-Chair: If you could identify yourselves for the purposes of Hansard and proceed with your presentation. For the benefit of Mrs Marland, it is 3:35 and 18 seconds. Go ahead.

Ms Ruth Corbett: My name is Ruth Corbett. I am the education policy analyst for Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, whose head offices are in Thunder Bay, Ontario. I'm almost assuming that everybody in this room knows where Nishnawbe-Aski Nation is. Just to give you an idea, it's all of northern Ontario. It's all the waters that flow into Hudson Bay and James Bay; that's how the geographic area was determined in our treaties, Treaty 9 and Treaty 5.

I'm going to make a short presentation on the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation's position regarding the OTAB legislation, Bill 96. I have with me Norm Wesley, who will be dealing with the Mushkegowuk council. Mushkegowuk council is a member of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. It's one of its councils in our organization.

The OTAB legislative process is occurring without the fundamental issue of first nations' self-government and jurisdiction being addressed. Where in this whole process is the implementation of the government-to-government relationship that is supposed to exist between the first nations and the government of Ontario? How is the province's recognition of the inherent right to self-government of first nations being addressed in this process?

In the proposed legislation there is no definite direction as to the participation and role of aboriginal people in the governing body of OTAB. Nishnawbe-Aski Nation is not an interest group and will not adhere to the proposal that an additional director may be appointed on the request of aboriginal people.

For Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, due to our geographic realities and the limited financial and human resources that we have, this process is moving much too quickly. This exercise is another example of the province setting the agenda

and the first nations are put in a position of responding, as opposed to being equal partners in this process.

Nishnawbe-Aski Nation is recommending that provisions are made in this legislation which enable the first nations to pursue a government-to-government relationship that exists between our first nations and the province of Ontario.

Just as a reality of our situation, Nishnawbe-Aski Nation has as signatories to our treaties both Canada and the province of Ontario, and the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation will not let the federal government renege on its fiduciary responsibilities in all areas of its responsibilities and services to the people of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation.

For the information of the clerk, I will be forwarding more background information on Nishnawbe-Aski Nation if it's required. I'll pass the rest of the statement to Norm Wesley.

Mr Norm Wesley: Thank you, Ruth. I should say that my name is Norm Wesley. I don't hold any official position with the Mushkegowuk council. I am merely a messenger. Greetings to all of you from the Mushkegowuk first nations and from the Mushkegowuk council. Our presentation today will focus on three areas: an overview of the Mushkegowuk region, the Mushkegowuk region and the federal-provincial training environment, and recommendations of Bill 96 legislation.

As a precursor to today's presentation I would like to remind the standing committee that the government of Ontario is committed, along with the aboriginal peoples, to the Statement of Political Relationship, which was signed in August 1991. It is important for all parties to keep this relationship in mind as we deal with any legislation within the province of Ontario.

1540

Specific to Bill 96, it must be stressed that we do not appear before the standing committee as representatives of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups. Mushkegowuk council appears today to speak on a government-to-government basis, as our Cree elders and communities have done so since we first discovered Europeans on the shores of James Bay and Hudson Bay a few hundred years ago.

Mushkegowuk territory covers 20% of the land mass of Ontario and is located in the northeast, on the coast of Hudson and James bays. The territory has an overall population of approximately 7,000 and includes eight Cree communities; namely, the first nations of Weenusk, Attawapiskat, Kashechewan, Fort Albany, Moose Factory and New Post, as well as the communities of Mocreebec and Moosonee. Mushkegowuk council consists of the first nations plus Mocreebec.

The Mushkegowuk region is a distinct area with a unique geography, culture and economy. The subarctic geography features muskeg, powerful rivers and the coast of James and Hudson bays. Of the eight communities, four are only accessible by air, while three have rail access. Only one community, namely New Post, is linked to the provincial road system.

The inhabitants of the region are predominantly Cree and have a culture and a way of life which is interwoven

with the lands, waters and animals. The Cree language is actively used and is the first language of many of our elders and adults.

The economy of the region can be summarized as a mixed economy with a traditional base. Hunting, fishing and trapping are important activities which provide close to 25% of the family income. The overall value of this sector of the economy was just under \$10 million for 1991-92. Other sectors of the economy include the first nation governments, microenterprises and formal businesses. The non-native business sector represents about 30% of the economy, and the Cree business sector represents only 2% of the overall economy. More detailed information on the Mushkegowuk economy is provided in The Mushkegowuk Economy: 1992 Summary Report.

It's important for the standing committee to note that the Mushkegowuk council, at the request of its own member communities, is currently engaged in preliminary discussions with the province of Ontario on self-governance within the Mushkegowuk region. Mushkegowuk council is undertaking detailed work in areas such as self-governance models, land use planning, and provincial and federal legislation and policy.

The Statement of Political Relationship commits the province of Ontario to engage in government-to-government discussions with aboriginal peoples. Aboriginal peoples themselves must decide what organizations and structures can best meet their present and future needs. In the case of the Mushkegowuk first nations, they have given a clear mandate to Mushkegowuk council to carry out self-government discussions with the province of Ontario for the Mushkegowuk region.

With regard to training and labour force development, the Mushkegowuk first nations have also requested that Mushkegowuk council speak on their behalf in addressing Bill 96. Other aboriginal organizations can raise issues of a larger aboriginal community; however, no other organization has been given the authority to represent the views of the Mushkegowuk first nations on this issue.

The Mushkegowuk communities are involved in community economic development initiatives at both the community and regional levels. The overall approach focuses on the renewal of the local community economies. The establishment of a regional support infrastructure, under community control, is an important component of this work. Efforts at the regional level are in three key areas: economic planning, business development and training.

Historically, the Mushkegowuk region has received very little training support from either the provincial or federal government. In terms of per capital training dollars spent by the provincial government, the Mushkegowuk region still ranks as one of the lowest in Ontario.

In 1991, Mushkegowuk council began to address this historical training neglect by establishing, in partnership with the Moosonee Native Friendship Centre and the Moosonee Metis Association, one of the first area management boards to be recognized in Ontario under the Pathways to Success initiative, a joint initiative of the national native organizations and Employment and Immigration Canada.

Our training board, Omushkegowuk Training Management Board, had a 1991-92 budget allocation of \$2.1 million. The 1993-94 budget allocation is \$2.8 million. These federal training allocations compare with pre-Pathways funding to the region which totalled \$200,000 to \$400,000 annually.

In early 1992, Mushkegowuk council and the OTMB learned of Ontario's intention to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. Since that time, Mushkegowuk council and OTMB have been actively involved in discussions on OTAB through the Aboriginal Intergovernmental Committee on Training and other vehicles.

It is with some amusement and a great deal of concern that we noted in 1992 that the government of Ontario was developing a new approach to training based on state-of-the-art practices in European countries such as England, Germany and Holland. Provincial politicians and bureaucrats displayed a complete ignorance of the aboriginal training structure known as Pathways located within the province and yet had detailed knowledge of European training structures. It seems that 500 years after Columbus discovered America, the provincial government would still prefer to look to Europe for solutions rather than consider the knowledge and structures within the aboriginal community.

The current aboriginal training structure within the province of Ontario, with 15 area management boards and a regional management board, could be an important model for OTAB and Bill 96. The key features of the Pathways structure are local partnerships, local control over funding approvals and direct linkages between the local boards and the provincial board, with the chair of each local board sitting on the regional body. Areas which need to be further explored within the Pathways system include questions about jurisdiction and control over funding levels and training program development.

The government of Ontario could benefit by developing a deeper understanding of the aboriginal training structure within the province and by incorporating suitable elements into the OTAB framework to the benefit of all Ontario populations.

Regardless of the overall OTAB process, the aboriginal community will clearly wish to build on the Pathways training infrastructure in order to better meet the needs of our communities. In the Mushkegowuk region, OTMB is a vast improvement over previous levels of funding and control. It is our intention to supplement the federal resources with provincial dollars. It is also our intention to work towards developing our own programs and services rather than simply accepting what is offered by either the federal or provincial government.

Mushkegowuk council wishes to clearly express that the status quo, where the province develops training programs and structures without a mechanism for input or control over decision-making from the Mushkegowuk region, is quite simply not acceptable. That approach has never met the needs of our communities and will not do so in the future. The only way we can ensure that our needs are met is for us to meet our own needs. Thus, we must have control over funding and the control over development of our own training programs and criteria.

To effectively address provincial legislation and training in a detailed and systematic manner, the Mushkegowuk communities must address two key barriers:

(1) Resources for consultation: To undertake detailed work in assessing provincial training programs, assessing training needs and developing/modifying appropriate board structures, our region requires immediate financial resources to permit a detailed consultation process to begin with our membership. It is our understanding that these financial resources are finally being approved for this work some six months after we were assured that the consultation process could begin shortly.

(2) Fiduciary responsibility of the federal government: There is a concern that the movement towards a devolution of federal training resources and responsibility to the provincial governments will lead to a decreased level of aboriginal control over training.

Further to point 1 above, it must be stressed that the aboriginal organizations are being asked to make presentations to the standing committee without having had the opportunity to carry out an adequate consultation with member communities. This places both the aboriginal organizations and the standing committee in an awkward position. This leaves both parties with two options: (a) to slow down the legislative process or (b) to include flexible amendments to Bill 96 which will accommodate aboriginal concerns.

Recommendations on Bill 96 legislation: Mushkegowuk council takes the following positions with regard to Bill 96 legislation:

(1) The Ontario aboriginal community needs to have control over adequate provincial financial resources to meet the training needs of our communities.

(2) The Ontario aboriginal community needs to have control over the design and development of provincial training programs for aboriginal communities.

(3) The present federally funded training infrastructure of area management boards and regional area management boards should serve as the foundation for provincially funded aboriginal training. Emphasis on local native control over decision-making and linkages between local and provincial boards should be maintained.

(4) Aboriginal access to funding and control over program development must be legislated through amendments to Bill 96 or through introduction of a second bill which would create a parallel board to OTAB for the aboriginal community. However, the Ontario aboriginal community must complete a detailed consultation process with its membership before choosing an internal or external process. Therefore, Bill 96 must be amended to allow for two possibilities, an acceptable aboriginal process within OTAB or a parallel external process.

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Point 4 above will call for creative legislative legal work which will enable either eventuality. Amendments to accommodate an internal process for aboriginal peoples will be extensive. The major amendments would be in sections 9 and 10, to ensure an adequate number of aboriginal representatives on OTAB selected by and not for aboriginal communities, and section 29, to ensure first nation

governments as an equal party to future modifications by the federal and provincial governments, as well as an additional section to clearly specify a separate aboriginal allocation within OTAB. Consideration should be given to improved linkages between local labour force boards and OTAB, section 18.

Community consultation will also be important for defining communication mechanisms between aboriginal and non-aboriginal sectors. In the Mushkegowuk region, local aboriginal control over training resources and program development is the only way to ensure that we can meet our communities' training needs. Adequate and appropriate investment in our human resources will benefit our communities, our region and the province as a whole.

Mr Chairman, members of the committee, that is the end of my presentation. As I said, I am merely a messenger of the Mushkegowuk council, and if you have any questions, I will try to answer them the best I can. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Wood, please.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): Thank you very much for the excellent presentations that have been put together. I know you're saying that you're delivering the message on behalf of the Mushkegowuk council, but the packages are well put together.

I'm concerned about whether the aboriginal groups think they could be involved in local boards with non-aboriginal groups, or should it be something that's designed entirely for the aboriginal communities on a government-to-government basis? I'm talking about the local boards, Norm, or—

Interjection: Do you want to answer that?

Mr Wesley: I'll try to answer that, Len. Based on some of the discussions we've had as a tribal council, and I think my response could probably be identical to many of the first nation communities under tribal councils and other organizations in the province of Ontario, the preferred route we would like to see as we deal with this piece of legislation, Bill 96, on OTAB is to go the route of government-to-government relations, that which is pretty well spelled out within the Statement of Political Relationship. I don't believe there's very much activity within the extent of trying to find a means of proving the elements of the Statement of Political Relationship. Perhaps this might be one of them. So I think that would be the preferred route.

That's not to say that we as aboriginal people, especially in the Mushkegowuk region, have not been able to work with non-natives and non-native communities. We have in many cases, as you will know, Len, in education and health and also with the area management boards. But the preferred route in terms of what I believe would be followed would be as government-to-government relationships.

Mr Wood: I know Tony Martin wants to ask a question, but just briefly, I'm aware of the relationship on economic development that works in Cochrane and Hearst from the James Bay and Hudson Bay coast coming down, which is all within my riding. With that, I'd just like to say that once again it's nice to see you and it's nice to see the NAN and the Mushkegowuk council come forward with a presentation on behalf of the aboriginal people. I'm sure

that the group here, the government as well as the opposition, is paying attention to what is being presented today. Thank you.

Mr Martin: I just wanted to say that certainly our government, through my colleague and neighbour Bud Wildman, I think has made some strides to recognize the inherent right of self-government and done some things of that nature.

It seems to me in some of the background reading I've done re this exercise that we have as well set up a separate organization equal to at least the other training partners, labour and business, to have those discussions happen and that in fact there is some effort being made to have a process that will develop something that, in the end, hopefully will be satisfactory to the native peoples.

I believe in March 1992 that particular group was set up called AICOT which made some request to the government and then the deputy minister responded with some discussions and the discussion continues. A lot of the groups that have come before us up to this point have shared a sense of urgency to get on with this thing. I recognize that the native folks, in Ontario particularly, have some stuff to work out before you actually get down to how you do this training and what kind of training and what does the future hold.

Are you suggesting that the rest of the province wait until that is done so that it happens at the same time, or what are you saying?

Ms Corbett: I'll answer that. The position of the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation as a political organization strongly believes in the government-to-government relationship and negotiations to take place with the provincial government and the federal government as well.

In the area of education and training, our view is that this whole process is a long-life and holistic process. We were actually happy, I guess hopeful, that the present government has seen fit to combine the existing or former ministries of Education, Colleges and Universities and Skills Development under one major ministry. How the whole structure is going to look remains to be seen.

But our position is that the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation is a government and will continue its negotiations in that vein. For a process that exists, we're on record also as recommending that the declaration of political intent be the vehicle in determining jurisdiction and self-government processes with the province in that it is the only process right now where the federal government is also a party to the negotiations. It always has been our belief that the federal government has a responsibility to the first nations in Ontario, and we're not going to let it forget that responsibility.

Mr Wood: Don't let them off the hook.

Ms Corbett: No.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. Mr Ramsay, please.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. I'm very impressed to learn through your presentation the organization, your training and management board that you have in place. I want to ask you about that, because what we hear from the background papers that will lead to the establishment of these LTABs—they're going to come

out of OTAB—is that the organizations that the federal government already has in place throughout Ontario in the non-native community—they're called community industrial training committees—are going to be scrapped and these LTABs will be the entities that take care of training.

I'm wondering what's going to happen to your funding when OTAB comes into play, because the CITCs have been funded by Employment and Immigration Canada, the same partner you have with your training boards. Do you have a sense of what's going to happen when OTAB is established and these LTABs are established in different regions? There's going to be one in the great northeast. Will this affect your organizations, or are you going to have the opportunity to keep the organizations going?

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Mr Wesley: This is one of the many elements that we have to look at. We don't know if it will impact on us to any degree, small or large, and this is what we're saying. OTAB is just an acronym that just came out of Queen's Park, if you will, and in the first nation communities, you talk about OTAB and they say: "What is it? Something you use for filing and that kind of stuff?"

Nobody really knows what it is, except for those of us, of course, who get the information. But the information has to be disseminated for the various chiefs and councils and communities to get an understanding of what this whole initiative's all about, and also how it's going to affect the current development with the area management boards and regional area management boards under the federal regime. We don't really know. I wish I had an answer for you, but I don't. But this is the nature of the beast we're dealing with, from our perspective.

Mr Ramsay: I'd be concerned, because other groups that have come before us have been concerned about the organizations that they have already been able to develop on the ground in their communities and, like you, have come together with a community of interest and have really started to be effective in providing training for their communities.

In the non-native community, of course, unfortunately it's all going to be scrapped with this new great idea that Queen's Park is going to have and it's going to put on everybody in all the communities, so I'd certainly be interested in finding out more about it on your behalf for sure. From your end, I'd certainly appreciate hearing from you what's going to happen, because this seems to be quite a revolution in the organization of skills training.

As far as I'm concerned, you should probably be left on your own. You've got a good organization in place. I'm very envious of the funding you've got. You've done very well, and it looks like you've got an effective group going there. As far as I'm concerned, you should be left to do that on your own if that's what you wish to do, because you seem to be effective.

I'm going to defer to my colleague Dalton McGuinty here.

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, please. Quickly, okay?

Mr McGuinty: I was interested to hear that you feel you have been left out of the process in terms of the process that lends some shape to the bill.

There's an OTAB project newsletter that comes out from time to time and it says in here that "The labour market partners and stakeholders were involved and consulted throughout the drafting process. The government said that having the partners help develop the bill would ensure that they'd be leading something they had created together." I gather you take some issue with that. Were you called upon at any time to express your views on this matter?

Ms Corbett: No. This is as a member of Nishnawbe-Aski Nation, and I'm dealing with the education and training initiatives of the province and the federal government. We do not receive timely information, and it takes us a while to get that information out and digest it and respond to what's happening, because our belief is that our members at the community levels be involved in this process. There are now only two or three people who make decisions and are a part of the procedure that's going on.

Mr Turnbull: Can I just get some clarification? My understanding of your brief is that you would prefer to be left alone to continue to do your own training, as your first choice, and you would do this in isolation from OTAB if it was set up. If that is not the case, you want to be more involved in OTAB and you have concerns about the funding for programs which would flow out of OTAB to your community. Is that a correct statement of the two alternatives that you've put?

Mr Wesley: Yes and no. Yes, up to the point that I guess if it wasn't possible to set up a parallel process within the province of Ontario for first nation OTAB to take place, I'm sure that there would be a lot of concern on the part of the first nation community, the first nation leadership, on how that would be interpreted in terms of perhaps the federal government abrogating its responsibility for training to first nation peoples in the province of Ontario. That is something I'm sure we're going to have to take a very good, hard look at, if in fact the development of first nation OTAB is not realistically possible within this government here.

Mr Turnbull: OTAB would be the overall organization. LTAB is what is referred to as the local organization, and there's concern that there would be weakening of that kind of structure. Let me ask you—and I'm not leading you in any direction—given the nature of training today and the competitive pressures we have around the world, is it possible that we in Canada should be looking for a national strategy rather than taking it down to continuing lower levels of government, or breaking up the pie? There are certain skill sets we're going to have to train, and flexibility is the name of the game. I just throw that out to you to see what your response will be.

Ms Corbett: Yes. In the long-term vision of our people, that is true, but in so many cases in our communities, we're looking at things from day to day, and for us to be effective partners and players in the whole area of training and the workforce in Ontario, we have to start from our

community levels and what our communities envision to be their role in this whole process.

Mr Turnbull: By that do you mean you feel you can more correctly target the kind of training you need for the sort of jobs you will have locally by keeping control at the local level?

Ms Corbett: Yes.

The Chair: On behalf of of the committee, I want to thank you, Ms Corbett, and you, sir, Mr Wesley, for your appearance here today. You have provided yet another unique perspective on this bill and its impact. You've spoken for a significant community, the Nishnawbe-Aski Nation. The committee here is grateful to you and we hope you'll tell the community you speak for that we appreciate their interest and their eagerness to participate in this particular process. We trust you'll keep in touch. Please have a safe trip home. Thank you kindly, people.

Ms Corbett: Meegwetich.

ONTARIO HOME BUILDERS' ASSOCIATION

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Home Builders' Association, if your spokesperson would please come forward, have a seat and tell us their names or titles, if any. We've got your written submission which will become part of the record by virtue of having been received as an exhibit. Please try to save the second 15 minutes of your 30 for questions and exchanges.

Mr David Wassmansdorf: My name is David Wassmansdorf and I am chairman of the Ontario Home Builders' Association training and education committee. I have held this post for the past three years, along with trying to build houses and develop land in the province of Ontario. With me this afternoon is Andy Manahan. Andy is director of industry relations at OHBA.

Our committee has been following the activities of OTAB with interest and we are both actively involved with the business reference group which has been working with the government to bring about appropriate legislation and interviewing suitable candidates for the governing body, among other things.

Members of this committee no doubt have some familiarity with OHBA. Several of you heard OHBA's president, Phil McColeman, speak on the Ontario Labour Relations Act last summer, so I will briefly summarize here the composition of OHBA.

As you know, the Ontario Home Builders' Association is the voice of the residential construction industry in Ontario, representing 3,800 member companies which are organized into 36 local associations. We are proud to note that this is an expansion of one over last year. Our membership is made up of all disciplines involved in the residential construction industry, including builders, land developers, renovators, trade contractors, manufacturers, suppliers, realtors, mortgage lenders, apartment owners and managers, housing consultants, economists, planners, architects, engineers and lawyers. Together we produce 80% of the province's new housing.

OHBA holds a number of seminars each year and our many committees and publications serve as educational

devices for our membership. For example, last month OHBA hosted its sixth annual Builder Forum which usually has about 24 different workshops ranging in scope from the building code changes to waste reduction on construction sites to planning process amendments. Of course, many of these workshops encompass both the political side in the form of legislative updates and the practical side in the form of technological advances.

Our local associations have monthly meetings and workshops on a variety of topics. Thus, despite the belief that some within government might have, that OHBA exists to pursue its own agenda with government, we in fact represent, in a very tangible way, our employees and our consumers, with the prime mandate of this organization being to share information and train our membership.

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From the outset, we wish to emphasize our support for the principles outlined in Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership for Ontario, and believe that in the long term, this type of significant restructuring of training delivery will greatly benefit our economic and social prosperity. There is too much fragmentation currently within government as it pertains to training delivery programs, and the schedule 4 corporation known as OTAB, if implemented properly, should go a long way to improving coordination, equity and cost-effectiveness.

We do have some significant concerns with the draft legislation, and we have some suggestions we'd like to make regarding improvements. I'd like to address those, decision-making being one of them. At the risk of being repetitious, we will state our fundamental concern, which pertains to the composition of the governing body and the way in which decisions are arrived at. As you have already heard from the business steering committee on January 28, consensus style decision-making can be strengthened by instituting a double-majority system of voting. In other words, both labour and management stakeholders must have a majority of their representatives show support for a proposal.

In addition, a simple majority of the entire governing body is necessary for an item to gain approval. Thus, with a full representation of 22 board members, a total of 12 members would have to demonstrate support for a particular motion in order for that motion to pass. I would like to note that some members of government agree with this, particularly Richard Allen, who wrote to the labour market partners and stated his belief that this type of consensus decision-making process was something he could support. I applaud him for that and hope that this will be carried out in the legislation.

In addition, as you know, labour has shown support for this concept in the past. Business groups have taken a keener interest in the double-majority concept in the last four months because of the breakdown in decision-making at the Workplace Health and Safety Agency, which has a bipartite board of directors. A double-majority voting system would have helped to avoid the fallout at the agency, and we believe it will offer a more constructive mechanism to achieve consensus at OTAB. I'm sure we all agree that consensus can be better achieved when issues

such as safety and training are debated in this manner as opposed to the polarization which has occurred when issues of this nature are dealt with in a collective bargaining fashion.

Representation on the governing body is also an issue which I'm sure you are familiar with. Labour will be entirely represented by organized labour even though its membership represents only one third of employees in the province. We believe there should be some mechanism to ensure that non-organized labour has a voice on OTAB's governing body. We live in a democratic society, and workers who have chosen not to join unions should be given a solid voice on our training direction in Ontario.

OHBA has not taken out billboards to protest government action, as other groups have, but we have closely monitored a variety of legislative initiatives. We know that the government respects the opinion of OHBA, and we contend that this government must start listening to business and not pander to union wish lists. The government of Ontario must do what is right for the people, the workers and the economy, not what is best for union power brokers.

The home building industry is primarily non-union, as opposed to the ICI sector: industrial, commercial, institutional. In fact, you may be surprised to find out that most of our home builders construct fewer than five homes per year. We have a hardworking, entrepreneurial group of people who take pride in the quality of their finished products and at the end of the day hope to make a profit doing so.

Owners of small building companies hire subcontractors to complete specific components of the house, but these owners are also, in many cases, involved in the actual building of these houses. Similarly, small renovation firms will often have the owner as the key skilled tradesperson on the job site. These people obviously have no need to become unionized, and prefer their independence.

OHBA has individuals in mind to sit on one of the four councils which will be created under OTAB. But we will be reluctant to forward these names if representation on the governing body is so highly rigged in favour of unions, and hence on training structures which accommodate and facilitate union environments. How will small business, such as the small home builders or renovators and the subtrade contractors they employ, be accounted for in this type of body? In reality, this group of owner-workers could just as easily be represented on the labour side of the governing body.

OHBA is particularly supportive of the apprenticeship reform council. It is quite clear that the long-term health of the construction industry is dependent on having a pool of talented young people who have had specialized skills developed through the apprenticeship system. A national apprenticeship survey which compared students who completed the program with those who did not found, as expected, that the median annual income was higher for those who completed their apprenticeship. Therefore, there are benefits to the individual, not only from a monetary perspective but also from the perspective of acquiring worthwhile skills.

The role of pre-apprenticeship training was touched upon in the national survey. Those who completed high school had a better chance of finishing their apprenticeship. We

would take this one step further, however. It seems that many young people have the impression that construction-related employment is not desirable, and this myth is exacerbated by a lack of promotion of our industry by high school teachers and guidance counsellors. I'm sure you've heard that from other industry groups as well.

In fact, the opposite is true. Construction workers have competitive incomes when compared with many other industries and office employment. Young people also have the impression that construction is typified by road crews, when in reality we know there is a whole range of onsite construction trade jobs from framing to roofing, electrical, plumbing and so on.

Without a concerted effort to enlighten young people about the benefits of residential construction employment, there will be shortages of labour, perhaps even severe labour shortages in the next 10 years. In March 1991, housing economist Frank Clayton completed a report for the Canadian Home Builders' Association which concluded that "the downturn in new housing construction is eroding the capacity of the home building industry to respond to the inevitable recovery in housing demand. Substantial layoffs have occurred within the industry itself and the subtrades that build the houses. Builders are leaving the industry." In our industry, when we talk about builders, we mean tradespeople and other related employment.

It is two years later and we continue to have high unemployment in the construction industry. Statistics Canada reports that in Ontario the unemployment rate is 26.7%. The average age in many trades continues to rise and in certain cases it is over 50 years of age. If you drive down to a job site and look at the masonry contractors and the bricklayers and what not, you'll see how old many of them are. OHBA believes that it will be extremely difficult to find appropriate skilled tradespeople if there is a significant increase in consumer demand for new housing. One of the consequences of this is that wages will be pushed higher. This will have a negative impact on housing affordability.

We are also still waiting for a noticeable turnaround in new housing demand. The total number of housing starts of 55,772 in 1992 was 6% over the level of 1991. However, this is still only 53% of the peak level witnessed in 1987 of 105,213 starts. Housing economists tell us that new housing should pick up in 1993, and I'm happy to say that we're seeing that on our job sites. We're looking for a forecast of 58,200 for this year and 67,200 for 1994 as a result of continued strong migration and an economic recovery.

In summary, demographics are not in our favour, and any dramatic surge in demand will strain our ability to supply skilled labour. Targeted training programs are certainly part of the solution to meet housing requirements.

What can OTAB do to help us out of this situation? We're not entirely sure, but coordination and funding assistance are two areas that come to mind. Let me tell you what the home builders have been doing to help ourselves and those thinking of a career in this industry.

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The Canadian Home Builders' Association national education and training committee has just designed brochures which will be distributed to schools across the country. One, entitled Career Paths in the Residential Construction Industry, outlines a host of employment opportunities which are available. Examples are marketing and selling, engineering and design, financing, building and renovating, and managing functions. It should be noted that we are supportive of greater employment equity and that our industry has witnessed a greater diversity of individuals entering these fields over the past 10 years.

Several of our local associations have run programs whereby high school students participate in the building of a house. One such program is CTOP, or the construction trades orientation program, which was a joint effort of the Hamilton-Halton Home Builders' Association, the Hamilton Construction Association and the Mohawk College skills development office.

Once the students complete the 34-week training program, they begin immediately as productive members of a construction team. During the program the student is adopted by a company for about 10% of his total training time. Another internship program offered to Kingston high school students who built portable classrooms is highlighted in the OHBA magazine appended to this presentation.

This type of approach has resulted in excellent placement ratios for those seeking employment in the residential construction industry. For example, when the CTOP course was last offered in 1991, there was a 100% placement level. We hope that this successful approach will be continued under OTAB. "Partnership" is an overused word, but it is necessary for training to accomplish its objectives. Can the work that we are doing be encouraged under the proposed structure of OTAB?

As mentioned earlier, we concur with the three substantive points made by the business steering committee that Bill 96 needs to be focused, needs to address wealth creation and in the end should be affordable. There must be a clear link between training and employability and therefore the word "appropriate" needs to precede "labour force development programs."

An emphasis on competitiveness is required in Bill 96. Higher workforce participation rates are a prerequisite to competitiveness, and in our global economy training to achieve job creation is mandatory. Placing greater focus on competitiveness within the legislation will not diminish the importance of equity concerns. Actually, competitiveness has a number of spinoffs which help to achieve greater equity in the workforce and enhance our ability to fund social programs. It should be stressed that Bill 96 must concentrate on the private sector to really make a difference in achieving competitiveness.

Affordability is a cornerstone of what OTAB should be in order to be effective. The goal of amalgamating the training functions of 10 ministries under one roof appears to be sound and should result in economies of scale. However, we must caution that an expansion of the bureaucracy would be counterproductive to an affordable OTAB and

would not necessarily result in the delivery of more or better quality training courses.

The framework we envision would be to continue allowing the grass-roots training initiatives already established under the CITCs. Local delivery entails appropriate geographical boundaries. While 58 may be too many, we believe that 22 local boards may be too few. Some local boards will cover much too broad a geographical area and this will limit effective delivery.

We recognize that Bill 96 does not directly address local board issues, but we want to highlight that these boards require a degree of autonomy to custom-tailor training programs that match local needs and labour market conditions. Therefore, flexibility is a principle which the governing body should keep in mind when setting the terms of reference. A client-needs-driven approach will assist in guiding OTAB through these waters.

The regulations under this act will no doubt have a significant effect on the shape of OTAB and on the role of local boards. We are thus supportive of subsection 30(2), calling for consultation between the minister and OTAB prior to the setting of regulations. The idea of reference committees is worthwhile and we would suggest that this will allow various sectors to provide meaningful input to the governing body.

In closing, we wish to commend the Premier on his recent initiatives to link welfare payments to obtaining job training. We are also pleased that the Honourable Dave Cooke will oversee the establishment of the Ontario training and adjustment board. OHBA has had productive contact with the minister when he was responsible for Municipal Affairs and we look forward to his pragmatic style and trust that he will influence the enactment of changes to improve this bill. We are both available to answer questions and we thank you for your time.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. I found it extremely informative, as I'm not all that familiar with the construction industry. You've brought some new insights to my attention and I appreciate that.

I very much found it interesting, as I had suspected, that we don't encourage our youths to get involved in construction, that if you ask parents, "What would you like your children to be?" probably the last thing they would have on their minds might be a constructive job or working in the service industry. Yet that's where a lot of people work and it's good work.

I'm glad to see you've got your booklet developed. I think that might help our young people to make a good decision.

Mr Wassmansdorf: We're hoping so.

Mr Ramsay: I appreciate your advice on decision-making. I think that's one area where the legislation is really silent. It really doesn't talk to solving a dispute if one should arise, and I think that needs to be addressed for sure, so I was pleased to see that.

For your sake, I'm pleased to see the forecasts for housing. It's going to start to finally do a modest upturn, from your figures here. If there's any investment that can

be made in the economy of Ontario, housing is not only labour-intensive but it demands a lot of materials, as you obviously realize, and it's a great way to get the economy going.

In closing, I'd just like to say that I hope what you've established in your apprenticeship programs and the tremendous linkage you have between the need for certain skills and the training that you provide can be maintained under OTAB. We have great concerns that all the present infrastructure is to be basically thrown out with the imposition of the OTAB structure locally, called the LTABs. I hope we can maintain what you've got here because, as in the industrial trades, it's very successful and yours is too. I certainly support the continuation of your programs.

Mr Wassmansdorf: If I could make a quick comment in response, we are hearing from some of our membership that the local boards are starting to have some effect in trying to get young people into apprenticeship programs that will lead people towards our industry. As those local boards get bigger and bigger, the opportunity for us to have an effect on young people and give them the opportunities in our industry would be diminished.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you.

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, briefly please.

Mr McGuinty: You've again raised a very important point, one connected with the representation on the board. It's one to which members on the committee, I guess, can grow a little bit numb because we've heard it so many times, but in fact it's vitally important. I'm glad you've raised it.

Something else that I'm attracted to is this business of a double majority, and I want to bounce something off you. Some of the presenters have said we should be looking at a triple majority, looking at the significant others, business and labour and the other groups. They as well should be participants in a majority so that we've effectively have three majorities. I just want to get your impression of that.

Mr Wassmansdorf: Andy, you've spent more time with the business reference groups than I have. I'd rather defer to Andy.

Mr Andy Manahan: In private conversation, I've raised this issue with some of the other business steering committee members. Despite the fact that we've heard the strong stance for a double majority system, I think there is certainly room to consider something like a triple majority.

But really the bottom line is that business and the employers in particular have a very strong interest in a competitive workforce, and we don't want it watered down by some type of avoiding mechanism which diminishes the business community's role. If there can be some sort of a quorum mechanism established for a triple majority that works without becoming too cumbersome, I think the business community would be supportive of that.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you.

Mr Turnbull: As your association's representative in the Legislature, it's good to see you here again. I share your concern about attracting people to the Leg—to the industry; crossed legs.

Mrs Marland: We would like to attract some other people to the Legislature.

Mr Turnbull: It is obviously a concern that, as you say, there are many trades where the people are typically over 50, particularly on the masonry side of things.

I particularly want to ask you about the composition of the board and any concerns you may have, recognizing that quite a bit of your industry has organized labour working in it but, as you know, there's a large number of union seats to be allocated.

1630

Mr Wassmansdorf: When you get outside the greater Toronto area, very little of our residential construction industry is organized. I was hoping I'd stressed that point enough. That's what we're concerned about, that you've got these seats on the labour side of the governing body, yet I very rarely hire a union tradesperson. We build in west-end Toronto as well as building in Guelph, and once you get outside the Toronto area, you just don't see it. It's different than in the industrial-commercial side where you see much more union activity.

Mr Turnbull: From a pragmatic point of view, if it were agreed that a proportional amount of labour seats would be allocated to the board, proportional to the amount of organized labour—let's just pick a number; let's say 35% or 40% of the labour side of it was to be from organized labour—what would be the logistics, in your mind, of choosing people to represent labour from non-organized labour?

Mr Wassmansdorf: I think we've seen at the local level where the LTABs, or what exists right now, the community industrial training committees, are operating, many of them, very well. When you get down to the more grass-roots level, I don't think you see some of the partisanship that we see as you go up the ladder. I think people can work it out between themselves at the local level with a mechanism in place through legislation. So I think we can find representatives through the grass-roots approach, through the local boards, who can represent both sides of labour.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'll just continue in that vein. Although, as some of the opposition members have said, we've heard this concern before, that is, about how organized labour can represent the interests of all workers, we still haven't heard of a very good mechanism to arrive at representatives who would be accountable to any particular group. After all, by definition, unorganized labour just hasn't got any kind of mechanism like that.

I noticed you talked about the local community, and it's true that there will be representatives chosen from local communities, but even there, there is that problem of whom do they represent. So it is something that has to be addressed, I think.

Mr Wassmansdorf: I'd also say, though, that businessmen like myself who are hiring subtrades have an interest in ensuring that the employees whom we hire—

Mr Gary Wilson: Excuse me, Mr Chair, could you ask for a little bit of quiet here?

The Chair: You just did, Mr Wilson. Don't interrupt these people.

Mr Wassmansdorf: We want to hire good, trained people so that when we go in and build a house, we build it once, we build it right. So it's in business's interest to see that we have good people.

The argument has been made at the federal level that, at the apprenticeship level, business can play a role in ensuring that labour requirements are met. We know better than most what we need and how it should be done. We've also learned through some of the other training we've done that it has to be peer taught, that there has to be a group interaction and that it has to be done on a friendly level, and I think we can do that. So there's a role for business to play in representing unorganized labour.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, did you want to give Mr Huget your last 45 seconds?

Mr Gary Wilson: The time is monitored? Then go ahead, Bob.

Mr Huget: Thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I'll be very, very brief. I just want to refer back to Mr Ramsay's comments about his being relatively surprised that young people were getting into the construction workforce. I would like to know, first of all, whether your organization is indeed encouraging young people to enter the construction trades, and second, whether you think that's a good move for young people in this province.

Mr Wassmansdorf: We think it is. In fact we had a committee meeting yesterday, the training and education committee, and somebody asked one of our members that very same question: Why would you want to be encouraging somebody into our industry? It boils down to that it's a lot of fun and it's very rewarding. The rewards that you get of seeing something that you build and that you create come up out of the ground are very rewarding. That can outweigh a lot of the disadvantages we have seen over the past three years.

Yes, we are trying to encourage people. The development of our brochures and trying to get our local associations out to the schools and at the career fairs and that sort of thing is, I think, having an effect.

The Chair: Thank you, gentlemen. You've brought yet another unique perspective, one of a significant industry here in the province, to the attention of the committee. The committee is grateful to you for doing that. We appreciate your interest in this legislation and its future. We trust that you'll continue to keep in touch, either with individual members of the Legislature or with this committee. We thank you sincerely for taking the time to come here today. Thank you kindly, people.

Mrs Marland: I really appreciated, Mr Chairman, what the Ontario Home Builders' Association said about young people going into the construction industry and I concur with Mr Huget's comments. I was surprised that Mr Ramsay would have said what he did.

The Chair: I was hoping that somebody would ask them whether that Wonderboard is really preferable to the green drywall when you're doing a shower enclosure in

terms of the differential in cost and the difficulty of working with it.

Mr Wassmansdorf: Better to get it done with then, and do it that way.

The Chair: Okay. You've got to pre-drill it before you—

Mr Wassmansdorf: You have to worry about it crumbling on you.

The Chair: Okay. Thank you kindly.

Interjection: Same with the bill, eh?

JOE PERNA

The Chair: The next participant is Joe Perna. Sir, please come forward and have a seat. Tell us what you will about yourself. Please go ahead.

Mr Joe Perna: Thank you. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, Mr Chairman. My name is Joe Perna and I'm here representing the interests of a number of business organizations. They include the National Council of Ethnic Canadian Business and Professional Associations, Toronto chapter, of which I'm a member of the board of directors. This organization is made up of 36 Metro area ethnically based business and professional associations representing close to 10,000 small businesses and professionals. The national organization, of which Toronto is a chapter, consists of over 100 associations across Canada in eight different cities, representing about 20,000 businesses and professional people.

The second organization I'm representing is the ETAC, Ethnocultural Training Advisory Council, of which I am one of the founders and currently the coordinator. ETAC has as its members the organizations that make up the Toronto chapter of the national council I just described. ETAC is a community industrial training committee coordinating group, or CITC. It has a small amount of funding from the private sector, with the majority coming from Canada Employment and Immigration. There is none from the Ontario government.

ETAC has been in operation for four years, and its mission is to assist people in the ethnocultural communities through specially tailored skills training courses to overcome the barriers to employment and job promotion resulting from their ethnicity. This applies especially to one of the province's best sources of employment talent, which is the ethnic peoples who are in our midst who were well trained in their country of origin but are underemployed here because of barriers resulting from their ethnicity.

ETAC operates in a way which we believe to be a microcosm of how OTAB hopes to operate, or perhaps ought to operate. ETAC's annual budget is around \$750,000 and its administrative costs are about 4% of that, much below, we understand, those of many similar organizations and other agencies.

The third organization I'm representing is the National Federation of Canadian Italian Business and Professional Associations, of which I'm the executive director. This federation has seven city chapters representing close to 2,000 member businesses and professionals across Canada. Six of

those city chapters are in Ontario, with close to 800 businesses and professionals represented.

Lastly, I'm representing the Canadian Italian Business and Professional Association of Toronto, of which I'm also the executive director. The Toronto association has close to 500 members.

In addition, I am a member of the OTAB business steering committee and have been involved on that for the last 13 or 14 months.

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I want to thank you on behalf of all these organizations for giving me an opportunity to present their concerns on OTAB.

It is with considerable reservation and some scepticism, however, that I am taking my time and your time to make this presentation. This scepticism is based on my understanding that it is extremely unlikely that any changes will be made to the draft legislation as it now stands as a result of any of the presentations you have heard or the written submissions you have received. This understanding comes directly from a recent meeting with the new deputy minister.

This understanding has, as a result, led us to believe that the existence of the standing committee and the efforts of those making submissions may only be a matter of optics, with not a whole lot of genuine substance to them.

Notwithstanding this particular concern, I will proceed with the concerns of the groups I am representing today. Some of these concerns are ones that have been addressed by other organizations, including the business steering committee. I'll be covering them as a means of reinforcing those concerns and to add the specific voices of the organizations I'm representing today.

Our overriding concern is this: The way the legislation presently stands, OTAB will be put in the position of being at great risk of not meeting its principal objectives reflected in its very name, that is, training and adjustment.

The talents, energies and moneys of OTAB could easily be diverted away from the tasks of training and adjustment to areas which are already being taken care of by other government agencies, or should be. The areas which lead us to this conclusion are as follows.

Improving the lives of workers and potential workers: We think it is a worthy and laudable goal that the lives of workers and potential workers should be improved where improvement is needed, a difficult task to accomplish with subjective judgements being requirements at best, however.

This task should not be assigned, as it is in the legislation, to OTAB. There are or perhaps should be other agencies to deal with this matter. OTAB should be devoting all of its resources to training and adjustment. This, along with other programs of assistance outside of OTAB, will be the best way to provide workers and potential workers with the tools they need to improve their lives.

Supporting the existing public education system: This again is a worthy and laudable goal for many reasons, but it should not be mandated to OTAB. What OTAB should be mandated to do is to seek out and provide the very best, appropriate training and adjustment for the best price. If

the existing public education system can provide an efficient and effective manner, then OTAB should use it of course. However, if the existing public education system cannot, then it should fix itself through its own means, not with the support of OTAB. To repeat, OTAB's job should be to seek and provide the best, appropriate training for the best value from wherever it is available.

Representation of independent workers: The labour market partners have left out one very important member— independent workers. While the business steering committee was charged with the responsibility of putting forth a slate of eight candidates to represent the composition of Ontario's business sector, the mandate to labour to put forth a similar slate for the labour sector is apparently quite different. The labour representation on the board will apparently consist only of eight organized labour people, which represents only about 30% of the Ontario workforce.

We are very puzzled as to why the remaining 70% of the workforce of independent workers is not represented by the eight labour representatives on the governing board. Surely if 70% of the workforce is independent of labour unions, then 70% of the eight governors representing labour should be independent workers. Perhaps this is an oversight on the part of those who designed the structure of the governing board.

The Ontario workforce: The way OTAB's governing body is set up, it would seem that workers are only those who are members of organized unions, and there is no apparent recognition of those who work independent of those unions.

There is also no apparent recognition in any of the language of the legislation about the vast amount of our workforce who are the owners and operators of small family-owned and slightly larger independent businesses, businesses started by immigrants, our ethnocultural community members. These businesses provide employment for all kinds of people. They also need well-trained people to survive and grow. The owners and operators of these small businesses are workers too.

The role of local boards: We feel the local boards should be empowered so that they can determine what training and adjustment is required in their area of jurisdiction, notwithstanding that their empowerment should fall within broad guidelines and objectives established by the governing body.

It should be clear to any discerning advocate of an effective training and adjustment program that only at the local grass-roots level can the training and adjustment needs be properly determined and delivered.

Of equal importance is the need to recognize that it is the local business operator who will know best what kind and level of skilled help is needed to meet the demand for the services and/or products produced in his or her business.

All too frequently, we find that segments of our education system are quite willing to provide and students are quite willing to take training courses that have little potential for improving access to employment opportunities.

Training tax: The idea of OTAB or some other department of government applying a training tax to business keeps popping up. It is our understanding that there are

two assumptions for considering this idea as a means of funding OTAB. One is that the business sector does not spend and has not spent enough money on skills training. The second is that the business sector can afford to pay such a tax.

When considering the second of these views, one should also look at the businesses that have gone bankrupt, quietly dissolved or moved out of the province. We submit to you that it is not because they were making too much profit and therefore could have paid an additional tax over the ones they were already loaded down with, and this says nothing about the nightmarish costs that would be required to collect something such as a training tax per se.

As for the idea that the business sector has not spent enough on training, one would have to wonder how Canada and Ontario ever managed to become the envy of the world for its standard of living and for the wide range of technologically and qualitatively superior products and services it produces.

Let me hasten to say that it was by no means singlehandedly done by the business sector. It was done through the partnership of business, labour, organized and independent, government and Canadian society in general.

Competitiveness and wealth creation: These are two ideas which the business sector has come to realize are dirty words. They are hopeful that one day soon these ideas will be widely accepted as being good for all of us. Believe it or not, the business sector is concerned about the greater good of all Ontarians, because if it's not good for all, then it's not good for business.

We need a workforce which can be successful in today's very competitive global economy, and yes, there must be to some extent competitiveness among each other in the same way that the players in the computer industry, for example, are competing daily for people to buy their particular products. Without a competitive attitude, everyone loses out on the very things we all seem to want to "improve our lives," to quote a phrase contained in the draft legislation about improving the lives of workers.

It is the competitiveness of business that is the engine of wealth creation, and without wealth creation, there can be no wealth to distribute. If we can all embrace this one idea, and in the context of training and adjustment in Ontario, the problems of joblessness will be replaced with the problem of how to distribute the wealth.

In summary, the members of the organizations I'm representing today are concerned that OTAB could become a consolidation of a number of less-than-efficient bureaucracies into one larger bureaucracy. They are concerned that OTAB is going to find itself increasingly lured into being all things to all people, simply because of a few inappropriate phrases that have been built into the legislation, which, as I said in my opening remarks, will apparently go into law as it stands.

We implore the standing committee to prevent this from happening and do everything it can to make sure that the legislation empowers the OTAB governing body to do one thing and one thing only, and that is to seek and supply the best appropriate training at the best value for all Ontario workers and potential workers.

1650

The Vice-Chair: Thank you very much. Ms Marland, you have five minutes per caucus and the five minutes include response time, so you may want to consider that when you're asking your questions.

Mrs Marland: Oh, I will, Mr Chairman.

The Vice-Chair: I thought you would.

Mrs Marland: I am very grateful for the guidance and the leadership from the Chair.

Mr Perna, I think this is an excellent brief. I really appreciate the information and the viewpoint you present to the committee through your comments. It's actually one that I haven't heard before from that particular perspective, and I really thank you for bringing that to us.

Naturally, I'm very interested in your comments on page 4. You're being very frank. You talk about whether or not this whole exercise of the public process of looking at this bill and the review—you say that it's with considerable reservation and scepticism that you're taking your time and our time to make this presentation.

Then you go on to say, "This scepticism is based on my understanding that it is extremely unlikely that any changes will be made to the draft legislation as it now stands as a result of any of the presentations" that we have heard or written submissions that we have received and, "This understanding comes directly from a recent meeting with the new deputy minister."

The new deputy minister with whom you met is who by name?

Mr Perna: Mr Pascal.

Mrs Marland: Mr Pascal, the best deputy minister in the government at the moment. I'm not surprised that you would come away from a meeting with full understanding of something without being misled at all. But you say that, "This understanding has, as a result, led us to believe that the existence of the standing committee and the efforts of those making submissions are only a matter of optics with no genuine substance."

I'm really sad that you have to say that but I have to tell you I agree with you. I realize it's a tremendous level of frustration for the people who are coming before all of our standing committees at the moment with this particular socialist government's legislation, but we hear time and time again, in the comments by the government members of our standing committees, that there's no way that this government is going to really listen constructively to information that is brought in a genuine, sincere way to critique their legislation and in fact to make it better for everyone in the province. I think particularly of your excellent point about the fact that in Ontario 30% of the workforce is unionized, yet half of this board is going to be represented by unionized labour.

It's difficult for me to ask you any questions because I agree totally with the points you're making here, and I think speaking for the particular groups of people you do speak for, Mr Perna, for the people who built this province, in fact for the people who built this country, to be a success. Particularly, I guess I'm biased about the leadership that those business people have brought to us in Ontario.

Mr Wood: Take a look at your cousins in Ottawa.

Mrs Marland: I'm very concerned about what is happening in Ontario today, and this legislation is just one further example, unfortunately, but I'm totally sympathetic with the points that you've made.

Mr Perna: May I respond to that?

The Vice-Chair: If you could respond, please.

Mr Perna: Make sure you understand, now, the point is that my understanding from the deputy minister is that indeed there won't be any changes to this legislation. He added that unless there was some major thing that would come along that might encourage some change, it would stand as it is.

I haven't had the luxury of being able to hear all the presentations during all these hearings, but I have been involved in this thing for, as I said, the past 13 or 14 months and have been to the meetings with all the labour market partners. All the issues, I believe, that have been presented to the steering committee have been heard by the OTAB project committee, by Minister Allen, by his deputy minister. I don't believe, except for a few little angles—when you turn the facet the light comes on a little bit differently—you've heard anything particularly new. If you haven't heard anything particularly new, you can be assured that nothing will change, because they have all heard all this already.

Mr Martin: I am somewhat disappointed that you and Mrs Marland both have such little faith in the process around this place. I've been here for only two and a half years. However, in my short time I've travelled on a lot of committees and there have indeed been significant changes, in every instance, by way of amendment from both the government side and the opposition side of the committee structure. However, that's not my question.

On two or three occasions, in the last couple of days actually, I've heard reference to a couple of things that leave me somewhat disturbed, if that's where people are coming from in front of this very important piece of legislation. Underlying all of this legislation is the need for change re the partnership that exists in this province as we, as you say, create wealth and, through that, create jobs and opportunity. It seems to me we need to be working probably differently with each other and recognizing the needs of everybody involved, all the partners.

Certainly business is a very important factor in the creation of wealth, but it would seem to me that in order to create wealth you also need the input and the sweat and energy of people; and people who are happy and satisfied workers generally produce the best. Anything that I've read in the last few years tells me that companies that take care of their people are usually the most successful companies.

It would suggest to me that it would be wise to make some comment to that effect in this piece of legislation, so that it would be part of the underpinning of anything we would do, and also the recognition of the very valuable contribution that colleges and universities have made over the years to the high standard of living that we have in this province and the contribution well-trained workers make there.

I have some difficulty understanding how we're able to separate the wellbeing of people from the creation of wealth and from the protection of the infrastructure we already have there: colleges and universities and other institutions, how that could be in any way seen as somehow getting in the way of doing what this piece of legislation is intended to do.

Mr Perna: May I respond?

Mr Martin: Yes.

Mr Perna: What you're saying is precisely what we see as the problem. You as an individual and anybody around this room can only do so many things. If you devote your attention to doing one thing well, you'll probably do one thing well. If you try to do 10 things well, you won't do anything well.

What we're suggesting here is that OTAB has one job, that is, to provide the best training and the best adjustment for the best value. If the public education system for some reason is unable to do this in certain areas and in certain ways, it should not be OTAB's job to support the public education system. It should be the public education system's job to pull up its bootstraps, fix what's wrong, be competitive and get the job done in the most efficient way, providing the best value.

That's not OTAB's job, but there is the Ministry of Education and all the other departments and the colleges and their chairmen and all their staff. They can figure out why they might be losing the training contracts that might be going to the private sector. But if OTAB has somebody tap it on the shoulder and say, "Look, we've got this big investment in our public education system and you're not giving it enough of the training dollars, you're giving too much to the private sector," then OTAB becomes burdened with a responsibility it shouldn't have. That's not OTAB's job.

Mr Sutherland: If I can—

The Chair: One moment. Mr Martin wants to respond and then you can jump in.

Mr Martin: I have some difficulty with the issue that you can only do one thing at a time. It seems to me you're a perfect example of a person who's able to do, actually, four or five things at one time. You're executive director and coordinator of a number of different organizations here and I'm sure—

Mr Perna: And I do them all poorly too.

Mr Martin: Is that right?

Mr Perna: Yes.

1700

Mr Martin: Okay. I suggest to you that in fact in everything we do, as we move into the next century and try to compete in a global marketplace, we should be trying to be coordinated and cooperative—

Mr Perna: That's a key word.

Mr Martin: —as much as we can with all of those people, institutions and organizations that are going to carry us there. That may be in some instances the public sector, where it comes to education.

Mr Perna: I'd like to respond one more time. Please make no mistake here. We're not suggesting that OTAB go into a corner, close all the doors and windows and not pay attention to what's going on. In fact if the governing body is doing its job, it will be interfacing with all of the different government agencies and private sector agencies and business to make sure that the training it's delivering and the adjustment programs it's delivering are going to be meeting the needs in sequel out there.

They're going to work with those agencies, but they're not going to do the agency's job. What they should be doing is saying: "Here is a problem. You fix it. It's not our job to fix it. We're trying to do training." That interaction is critical to this. We don't want to see OTAB be isolated. If it is, it's not doing its job.

Mr Sutherland: Just to pick up on that, I guess maybe part of the problem is in terms of trying to explain the intent of the legislation. I notice you've made reference to the clause about the improvement of lives of workers and potential workers, and that's come up a lot. I guess somehow people have taken that to mean that OTAB is going to do everything to improve the life of a worker.

I think your last explanation was very good, that its mandate is providing training services, providing adequate training, of course, to ensure that we have the skills to work with business, to create the wealth and to ensure that all of the players can play in the creation of wealth, because obviously if they're not, they're not going to be purchasing products and the cycle isn't going to go forward.

I like your last explanation of how they're going to interface in terms of doing those things. I mean "the improvement of lives of workers." Obviously, we recognize that within that they're going to do it. There are some things that they're going to have to interface on. For women coming into the workplace with children, they're going to somehow have to interface that some provision is made for child care, but we don't expect them to look after the housing needs of people. I think that's the message that needs to get out when you look at those types of phrases and some of the other phrases.

The reality is, creating wealth ties in with social justice. You can't have a recovery—we have a statistical recovery. We're not going to have a full recovery with over 10% unemployment. We've somehow got to get that unemployment rate down by getting more of the people who are not in the workforce into the workforce somehow, and that's a combination of two, achieving both goals, economic renewal and social justice at the same time.

I think some of the interpretations given that this means it's going to do everything, I'm not so sure that in reality and in practice it will be doing everything.

The Chair: Mr Perna, I'm going to let you have the last word.

Mr Perna: In the training organization that I'm working for, the largest part of the people who are being trained are women who have not been able to get a job at all. They're on welfare, they have babysitting needs, they have travel

needs, they have language problems, and I'm extremely sensitive to those needs. Those are factors which are allowing them access to the training. OTAB should be concerned about access to training.

Improving the lives of workers, back on the point of Mr Martin, enlightened employers and even those who are not so enlightened realize that their businesses cannot succeed without good employees, happy employees, productive employees, healthy employees. They know this. But when you build into the legislation a phrase that says, "improve the lives of workers," and give that job to OTAB, you're giving the OTAB governing board a responsibility for which there are many other government agencies already doing that task. If the lives of workers are in jeopardy in some way or not being improved adequately, these other departments should be doing their job.

OTAB's governing body should interface with them and kind of help them along, but don't ask them to do that job. Their job is to make sure those women and those construction workers etc get the training they need to be able to get a job or to get improved employment positions. That's all. Focus your attention, be a specialist, and if you're a specialist, you'll be a winner. Each department can be a specialist and work together, and then we'll have the partnership I talked about in that last phrase.

The Chair: Is this dialogue so provocative that you feel obliged to add something? Go ahead. The government caucus went a little over time, so I'll make sure we accommodate you.

Mr McGuinty: Mr Perna, you've made an excellent presentation and you have focused on one of the problems that besets this bill, which is, what the devil is it all about? Are we after training here? Are we after social objectives? Are we after satisfying particular interest groups? Does the public interest have any bearing on all of this at some point? You've addressed that very effectively.

You've spent some time dealing with this matter, more time than most of us here have. I was wondering if you were familiar with this particular aspect. I know it will be a cause for concern. It certainly is a cause for concern for me. OTAB, we are told, is going to be a schedule 4 agency. The definition of a schedule 4 agency is one which is intended to be completely funded out of the revenue generated by its programs. You are aware that Bill 96 incorporates a provision that authorizes OTAB to levy fees, and you are probably also aware that the Ontario Federation of Labour has advocated or certainly made more noises about training levies to be imposed on employers.

My concern is that what we're going to do is set up an agency here which is going to be looking to employers for funding, and in many cases, as we've heard today and throughout the course of our hearings, employers are already engaging in processes to train their workforce. I'm just wondering what kind of concerns this gives rise to.

Mr Perna: I did address that in my comments here. Whoever is in government—it doesn't matter which party it is—if you don't pay attention to the needs of small business, who's going to lose? The small business is going to lose something, but the whole province is going to lose.

Everybody's going to lose. If you took a lesson from one of the premiers in the eastern provinces, he made some legislation that's reducing taxes for small business, because I think it's common knowledge that small business is what seems to be the engine for jobs etc.

You can put the tax in, whoever wants to put the tax in. It's not going to pay off, because the businesses are struggling to stay alive and some more of them go out of business because they're borderline businesses. Some may say: "Maybe they should go out of business. They're not efficient. They're not competitive enough." It isn't going to make any sense.

Another thing is that all we need is another sort of taxing mechanism. I find it, and everybody I know in all these organizations finds it, totally ludicrous that still today, after however long the GST has been in place and however hated it is by whoever is hating it, we have two taxes and we have 10 governments and another government collecting all these taxes.

I can tell you right now, if you want to build up the training budget, wipe out one of those taxes and blend it with the other one. I don't care which way you go. Take it out of the feds and put it in the provinces or take it out of the provinces and put it in the feds, but don't do it twice. We're paying two groups of people to collect the same taxes from the same people. It makes no economic sense. If any of you have a business or had a business, you wouldn't tolerate it, but we're tolerating it.

1710

Why don't we create what I want to call real jobs instead of artificial jobs? With all respect to politicians and bureaucrats and government employees, the real jobs come out of manufacturing and services. The rest of it is to assist that and all the people who are in the process. If you create a huge bureaucracy to collect taxes and then to do it again and now do it a third time, to say nothing of how you're going to figure out who pays what and who gets the benefit because they've already paid something into it, this is not efficiency. This is not what I hear Mr Rae saying today. Mr Rae is talking about streamlining and cutting down and downsizing. Where could you find more money for training than by getting rid of duplication of tax collection efforts? Triplicate it, why don't you? Thank you very much.

The Chair: Mr Perna, you've obviously been provocative. That's a good thing.

Mr Perna: At least everybody's awake anyway.

The Chair: You've sparked some interest on the part of the members of the committee, and I tell you, the committee's grateful to you for your interest, for your participation, coming here to Queen's Park today and being prepared, as you have been, to spend time with us sharing your views with us. We are grateful to you.

Mr Perna: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you kindly, sir. Please keep in touch, either with individual members or with the committee as a group. Take care.

ONTARIO FEDERATION OF
INDIAN FRIENDSHIP CENTRES

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. Those spokespersons will please come forward, have a seat, tell us their names, their titles or positions, if any.

Ms Sylvia Maracle: Serial numbers?

The Chair: Well, somebody's liable to ask you, but it's none of their business.

Ms Maracle: I'm Sylvia Maracle. I'm the executive director, and I'm a Mohawk from Tyendinaga who happens to be in Toronto for a while. I'm joined by Tim Thompson, who is the education policy analyst—he's a Mohawk from Gibson, from Wapekeka—and Nena LaCaille, who is one of our trainers, who's a Seneca from Pennsylvania originally.

Thank you very much for the invitation. We have a written brief, which I'll try not to bore you with too much. I offer apologies on the part of my president, Vera Pawis-Tabobondung, who is caught in a snowstorm just outside of Barrie and unable still to make it here, and my vice-president is grounded in London. So we're pinch-hitting, and I hope that you'll find we are able to do that and their money in employing us is well spent.

In order to be able to discuss the proposed Bill 96, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, we wanted to take a minute to express to the committee, to have you understand, if you will, what role the friendship centres play in aboriginal development in this province and why our comments with respect to training may or may not have some import for you.

Friendship centres, by definition, service urban aboriginal people in Ontario. By agreement, it appears that almost half of the status Indian population from Ontario reserves lives in urban areas, and of course the Metis and non-status population had no such reserve land base. Additionally, because Ontario is such a land of milk and honey, we receive migrating native people, we used to be called, migrating aboriginal people, from other provinces and territories who come here in pursuit of education, training and employment.

About 30 years ago, the friendship centres developed through a very informal nucleus of attempting to deal with urban life skills, with what happens when you come to town: How do you find a house and a job and how do you approach things, how do you fill out forms, in fact who do you talk to? Friendship centres sort of grew out of that in a very informal setting and ultimately created a formal organization of constitutions and letters patent and things like that.

The friendship centres in Ontario are core-funded through a federal program by something that used to be called the migrating native peoples program. We had not quite as much protection as migratory birds, but then a bit more so as years went by in terms of developing something called the aboriginal friendship centre program. We receive programming funding and support through various ministries of the provincial government.

When we started, it was very basic. It very much was targeted at looking at employment and training for our

people, a place to live and food on the table, and to some extent we still do that, but now we do a lot more sort of social programming, cultural programming and recreational programming. As the years went by, friendship centres found they were in the business of providing training to try to establish a level playing field for our people.

Whether we like to admit it or not, if we have an accent and we're very brown and we come from environs which are not always southern or urban in the north, there are difficulties with respect to participating in the quality of life in that community. Friendship centres felt we needed, more so than anyone else, to make the commitment to employ our own people, to employ people who had a heart, who believed in what we were doing, and that we were prepared to provide the skills, the knowledge and the technical assistance for them to do their job.

Friendship centres, over the course of the years, recognized ourselves as training institutions, as hiring people that perhaps no one else will hire in a community, some not quite as urbane as Toronto, like Moosonee, Cochrane, Geraldton and Sioux Lookout. In some of those communities friendship centres continue to be the major employer of aboriginal people in those towns.

One of the things we have found ourselves working on lately is defining that our training, our education notion, is a lifelong process, that it indeed begins before we arrive in this world with traditional teachings while our mothers are carrying us and continues until the last breath that we take in this reality. In defining that as training, you can understand, dealing with OTAB, that it might not be easy for us to find our niche, that indeed it might not be a system that would facilitate our involvement as aboriginal people from a culturally based perspective of training at all.

One of the other things we recognized in friendship centres being training institutions is that our staff do not stay with us for long periods of time. They've gone on to become executive assistants of ministers in the government, bureaucrats, they've worked for other Indian organizations, they become negotiators for land claims and indeed college and university professors in other places. Having started out perhaps in centres with very little or no formal training, that exposure to on-the-job training, to mentoring, to sorting out the system for them has encouraged people to go on and to pursue opportunities that have been available to them.

The other thing that friendship centres have contributed to over our development is the development of other aboriginal organizations: housing corporations, child and family services, agencies, hostels, a variety of new day care initiatives, all kinds of other agencies in town so that not everything is centralized in the centre.

Probably we employ, seasonally at least, more than 1,000 aboriginal people, which makes us a significant employer in Ontario. It's seasonal because a lot of our work, as you know, comes from both the federal and provincial governments and it's around projects, make-work, summer/winter works and those kinds of things. When we were working in the federal government we used to call them LIP, LEAP and whatever. We didn't know what the trend was at the time.

One of the things we're trying to do in centres is—you cannot have any television or radio in your home and not be aware of what's happened to us with respect to residential schools; with respect to the systemic issues that have resulted in our leaving mainstream educational institutions; with our returning to colleges and universities in very large numbers but often not as the young 19-year old from Mississauga does.

We're mature students, we already have families, we're coming a long way from our home communities and having to battle with post-secondary institutions. Therefore, training, training on the job, mentoring and very specific programs that are designed in our communities are imperative to us. The other thing is that we've had very low participation rates, which the OTAB project and various other ministries can tell you, with respect to participating in what is considered mainstream training.

The other issue I want to talk to you about with respect to friendship centres is that we have been involved—and perhaps some of my colleagues who have been here earlier than I have have talked to you about something called Pathways to Success, an initiative with the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission designed to increase training, to increase employment opportunities and to look at the Canadian labour force development.

Pathways to Success was an initiative that was a response to some 600 letters, calls and meetings from the aboriginal community telling the federal government that its employment and training programs were not meeting our needs.

1720

It was decided that a partnership that is a bit inequitable in that they still have the money and they say, "Here's how much it is; do the best you can," but a partnership none the less, was created, and the friendship centres participated with other aboriginal groups in Ontario to create 15 aboriginal area management boards, as they're called. They all feed into a regional system, which is province-wide, called the Regional Aboriginal Management Board of Ontario. There we attempt, from our own perspective, decision-making about our pots of money, as they're decentralized; they're held by the government, but control or decision-making is decentralized. The ministry approves anything over \$100,000 as a project, just to keep its hand in it, I guess.

Anyway, we have been involved in that initiative. We've been involved in it now for more than two years in Ontario and we've had some serious successes. We've had very few weak links in the chain of Pathways to Success. It's not perfect; it's not full aboriginal control but it does contribute towards the self-determination that we as aboriginal people—whether we live in first nations or in urban areas, are male, female, able-bodied, disabled or are even francophone aboriginals—have been able to participate in. It is a place where, as boards, we sit from all perspectives and make decisions with respect to our training, to our employment and ultimately to the labour force development.

We sort of take that friendship centre development and our participation in Pathways and come here now to discuss OTAB. OTAB, as we understand it, is supposed to propose this new partnership with broad participation from

a variety of groups to participate in—guess what?—labour force development, training and employment, exactly initiatives that we have been involved in for many years and in a different forum.

At the same time that the province is discussing the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, the province has committed itself to aboriginal peoples, through the Statement of Political Relationship and through a variety of other understandings, to create a different relationship. That's exactly the crux of our presentation today. We do not want a relationship with Ontario that on the one hand says, "We'll deal with you on a nation-to-nation basis," and on the other hand says, "Let's begin to develop the institutions which will promote your self-determination," and then on the other hand says, "But you're simply one of a list of players and the relationship is going to be prescribed to you in something called the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board."

It is not the intention of friendship centres to suggest that the people identified in OTAB should not continue to address their unique and special needs. Indeed, there is probably a need for a process and for commitment and support given to people who are normally disadvantaged in a system.

But friendship centres do not want to compete with those interests. Friendship centres are more comfortable and have had more success in an aboriginal-specific process. We do not want to participate in training that is so far compromised to meet the norm that in fact it meets no one's needs. We want to address our needs consistent with our own development. We do not want to be part of the OTAB legislation, except for Bill 96 to indicate that it does not apply to us. We want aboriginal people and aboriginal communities to provide aboriginal training, employment and labour force development.

We have already had experiences with the government through two acts: An Act respecting the regulation of Health Professions and other matters concerning Health Professions, and An Act respecting the regulation of the Profession of Midwifery. While those may seem small and insignificant acts to you, they have provided for us to be exempt from mainstream legislation. They have provided for us to be exempt from the governing bodies created to control those structures and have recognized our own people, our own direction, our own traditional approach, our own cultural knowledge as a legitimate way and base to provide services to our people.

We believe it is imperative for aboriginal people to design, develop and deliver aboriginal training. It is also important that we be given the resources, time and opportunity to pursue this rather than be forced to meet someone else's timetable or preferred approach. We cannot simply participate in an agenda established for the general population and further compete not only to be heard, but for minimum resources.

We are requesting the committee to make amendments to the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board Act, that those amendments be such that the bill not apply to aboriginal people and respect that aboriginal people be able to provide training in a manner which is appropriate to us.

We believe that the evolution of our relationship with the government of Ontario, and indeed the people of Ontario, does not require us to continually fight for our place in the process. An aboriginal process—one developed, designed and delivered by aboriginal people—will meet our needs. We do not want to subjugate our process for one that's prescribed through OTAB. We do not want token representation or participation and to be one out of 22 or 23 voices. Friendship centres support the creation of a distinct aboriginal labour force development and training process.

The federation would therefore strongly urge the standing committee on resources development to revisit the bill and ensure that aboriginal people can design their own process and not have one imposed upon us.

Thank you for your time and attention.

The Chair: Thank you, kindly. Mr Wood, please.

Mr Wood: I don't know if I have a question, but there are a few comments I want to make. You've got an excellent presentation you've brought forward. There are a number of friendship centres in my riding. You're aware probably that I represent the area from Cochrane and Moosonee circling around back by Ogoki and Constance Lake and down through Hearst. There are a number of friendship centres I meet with on a regular basis. I'm aware of the hard work that is going on by people like Dorothy Wynne and other people in the communities who are trying to get training programs out there and put the urban aboriginal people into work of some type.

I'm also aware of the fact that 90% or 95% of the aboriginal population in some areas is unemployed. They depend on whatever they can get from trap lines. The fur industry is having a hard time and rates are really low. There's no doubt about it that there is a lot of hardship out there in a lot of those areas. I just wanted to throw those comments out. I've listened very intently to what you've brought forward. We'll be discussing that in committee with some of the other people, as the government, as we go along. I'd like just to thank you again for coming forward with your presentation.

The Chair: Please feel free to respond if you wish.

Ms Maracle: I don't have a response really, except to suggest that obviously Mr Wood does know his community. It may sound very peculiar to some of you that we don't want to be named in the OTAB legislation, because you say, "Gee, you have all this unemployment." But at the same point in time, ultimately, in order to have meaningful development in our community, it has to come from us. It can't be prescribed and it can't be any more just one person who represents an aboriginal view.

By the time the seven or eight provincial territorials have been here or sent in their briefs, the thing we have all agreed on, which is somewhat miraculous, is that we have agreed we don't want OTAB to apply to us. We don't want one super-Indian whom we can find who is going to represent everybody's interests, both in a cultural sense, in a male-female sense, in a young-old sense and in a sense of overall development. Some people want very cultural, very traditional-based approaches. Other people are quite willing to participate in medical sciences. I don't know if

the person has yet been born who can do that. It's going to create more division and animosity in our community.

We can rally around being unemployed and we can look at doing something. We could talk a lot of things about training and about recommendations one might want. I understand the process of committee. You're dealing with legislation, so we had to confine ourselves to those comments, but we do appreciate the support and that some people are aware of friendship centres and that it is not an easy job.

We rely on a lot of volunteers as well, as you know, Dorothy being one whom you've mentioned. Those people don't get paid, but they need training, because mainstream isn't doing the work. The child welfare workers aren't out there or MNR is out there too much, depending on which perspective you're looking at. We rely a great deal on our people, who require all kinds of training to just be able to participate in some sense, as we said, on a level playing field.

1730

The Chair: Mr Wilson, be real brief, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes. I just wanted to make a point that you've alluded to. You said that so far in the legislation, Bill 96, it is just conditional in its reference to a representative of the native community.

Ms Maracle: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: If a request is made by a recognized group, then that would be accepted, but it is understood that there are, I guess, considerations that the native community wants to take into account here and you've certainly mentioned several of these.

Ms Maracle: I think we would be happier, frankly, if we took the approach that we took in the Regulated Health Professions Act, which was to say it will not apply to aboriginal people for these reasons: for the reasons that we don't want to lay institutions on them any more, that we don't want them to be perceived as a sense of minority, that there is a different way to play, that the approaches we have taken haven't met aboriginal needs, and that frankly it's a waste of time and energy and resources if people are going to continue to prescribe things to us. We need to do that development ourselves.

I understand that it is somewhat of a benign reference. In fact, they flew it by me. I have many other hats, one of which is that I am the co-chair of the aboriginal intergovernmental committee on training, which is how all these groups got here, because we had to crack the whip over there.

We ask to be exempted. We had our traditional healers and our midwives exempted from the other legislation. We're saying, "Why bother to make a passing reference that says we can have one super-Indian?" It's not real. It's not realistic. It sets up expectations in other communities that we've told you: "By all means, go ahead and meet their needs. Just don't drag us as one of a list of voices."

Mr Ramsay: I'm very sympathetic to what you're asking and I actually would be prepared to move such an amendment. The only thing I would want to be sure of before I did that was that Pathways to Success was going to continue.

What we understand from the federal government is that once OTAB becomes established, and OTAB "may," according to the legislation—it should be "shall" but anyway—set up the local boards, the LTABs. Then, the federal processes, the committees, the CITCs, as they're called in the non-native community, community industrial training committees, will be scrapped.

What I fear is that maybe the same department that funds your ministry, Employment and Immigration, may be scrapping your program. I don't know this, and I guess my question is, do you know this? What's going to be the future of your Pathways to Success?

Ms Maracle: Any of you who've dealt with the federal government knows what the length of its promises is. I can tell you that we have two full years left on a \$200-million mandate, that we are in the process of evaluating it, that those of us who are involved in that other process do not—if this were a federal committee, we would suggest to them that they should not be offloading, that their federal responsibility is to aboriginal people, irrespective of residency, that our processes have proved more successful than their 20 years of attempting to deliver a variety of other initiatives and that very much it will remain in place.

If I had a crystal ball, I'd be inclined to suggest that Pathways to Success will continue and very much this government should be encouraged to make sure that aboriginal issues are not offloaded and that we're just not all thrown into some nice mixing bowl, saying, "Gee, it's okay because we're taking care of it."

This hasn't been done, and regardless of what happens with Pathways, there will be a successor. Aboriginal people are not about to take a step back to the white paper policy. Certainly, we have commitments from all three parties, or three major I guess, that participate, that given what may happen to them in the next 10 months, any of them, they are interested in continuing a relationship with respect to employment development and training with aboriginal people. It would be very much throwing the baby out with the bath water. It's a model that works; it's cost-efficient; it's had impacts. I don't see it sort of disappearing tomorrow.

Mr Ramsay: I hope not, because as the two senior levels of government redefine their roles and responsibilities, I would imagine it is the desire of the native community that the federal government retain that responsibility for native affairs.

Ms Maracle: Exactly, and it's our desire that whatever's going to be done with the province, we do so in a coordinated way between aboriginal people and the province and that we're not part of a whole list.

That list, as you know, is very popular. The list is used in human rights; it's used in employment equity; it's used in training; it's used whenever we're talking about the disadvantaged. I think that's unfortunate, that we shouldn't be sort of fourth or fifth on a list and that aboriginal people and aboriginal issues, whether it's in this province or wherever, need to be dealt with in a distinctive way.

Mr Ramsay: Right. The other element there too is that, with the Charlottetown accord, it looked like training was going to be handed down to the provinces, but now

with the defeat of that and with what we hear from the federal minister, his musings, it looks like the federal government wants to retain some jurisdiction over training. This is what the OTAB process was supposed to do, combine it down at the provincial level, which probably for the non-native community would be actually just fine; that's from my perspective. So I would think, then, that the federal government would retain those responsibilities. With that caveat, I'd be prepared to move that amendment to exempt you from this legislation.

Ms Maracle: Thank you.

The Chair: Mrs Marland, then Mr Turnbull, please.

Mrs Marland: Sylvia Maracle, I don't think you need to be at all concerned about the fact that you—I've forgotten who you said was where, somebody in the snowstorm in Barrie—

Ms Maracle: Yes, our president.

Mrs Marland: —and your president stuck in London, because you are a very dynamic young woman, and you certainly have made an excellent presentation on behalf of those for whom you speak.

Ms Maracle: We would tell you it's a cultural predisposition of our nation.

Mrs Marland: I love it. I don't think you need to worry about the fact that they're now going to be able to read in Hansard what a good job you did speaking on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres.

It's interesting, I have to admit, Sylvia, to hear you talk about—I'm using your words—"one superIndian," or one superaboriginal is probably what I would be trying to say, but I feel the same way when I look at the makeup of this board that defines one director representing women. Some of the arguments that you make, I realize how personal they are for you, and I respect that very much, but that fact is that when we look at the makeup of this board, with one representing persons with disabilities and one representing racial minorities, the more we do this with boards, the further we get away from accomplishing what it is that we want, which is equality for everybody, because every time we define the differences, we go back two steps, in my opinion.

I'm just wondering what would happen if we start dropping the labels. For example, surely among these seven directors representing labour and seven representing business, we might be lucky enough somewhere in there to have a woman or someone with a disability or a racial minority and, based on what you're talking about where all your people are moving, we probably, even without planning it, would have somebody with an aboriginal background. Wouldn't that be ideal, rather than having them there because they were any one of those things that are being defined under items 5 through 8, as far as the makeup in the board?

Having said that, I also realize that at this stage I'm sympathetic to what it is you're saying about wanting to get on with your own business because you know your own people. The friendship centre is a wonderful name for the work and the scope of work that those centres have been doing. I can understand why you're saying here, "It is

also important that we be given the resources, time and opportunity to pursue this rather than be forced to meet someone else's timetable and preferred approach."

When you talk about the preferred approach, I hear very clearly, Sylvia, what you're saying; it's a preferred approach because you know what works. That's the bottom line of what you're saying. That's why you had the input in the other acts that you referred to, the Midwifery Act and the Regulated Health Professions Act. That's really what you're saying. Eventually, I'm sure that your descendants and my descendants will be sitting around a committee like this maybe 100 years from now, hopefully where there won't be any differences. Would that be an ultimate goal for you, where there would no longer have to be differences identified and enshrined?

1740

Ms Maracle: I guess if I have to, as a representative of my people, sort of talk about vision, what we'd like to do is to participate in the social and cultural fabric of the communities in which we reside in a self-determined way that respects our cultural distinctiveness. We had said earlier, and it perhaps bears repeating, that we have no desire, as the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, to tell women or to tell the disabled or to tell racial minorities or to tell trainers or anybody else, business or labour, how they want to go about constructing their business. We very much encourage you to put the best minds and hearts you have to that job, by all means.

In the aboriginal community, I think you're right: We know exactly what we want and we know what works for us. We simply need to be able to do that and to not have one more piece of provincial legislation—or federal, for that matter—that applies to us that presupposes some conditions that we don't think we can operate in. Even the notion as benign as the wording is, about how, at some point, "legitimate" or "recognized" representatives of aboriginal people would put forward a name, simply will not happen in my lifetime.

The people who are coming after me are much more assertive that aboriginal people have to be responsible for aboriginal people and that our own letting go of our culture resulted in a very downward spiral that we're in that affects us socially and in terms of education and in terms of recreation and in terms of power and participation. We are attempting, as a federation, people who work in urban areas and working with our colleagues, to return to and to pick up our culture, to stand up on our own two feet and make a life for ourselves. We cannot do that today and we probably can't do that in the next 10 or 20 years if we're constantly going to be legislated to have "one."

We're not "one." We're not a homogeneous cultural community. We have very different opinions and approaches, and they need to be honoured in the multicultural approach that everybody's taking. That notion of difference has to be applied to the aboriginal community as a whole. What they will want to do in the remote north and in northeastern Ontario and in central Ontario and in the south and on reserve and off is going to be what that community knows works for it. There isn't sort of a prescribed formula that

says, "Here's where we're going," except that we are in serious recovery. Training and employment opportunities can help us back on a track of wellness, but it's a track that we've got to clear, that we've got to identify and discover, and learn to walk.

The Chair: Ms Maracle, your half-hour is up. However, we're blessed with the unusual circumstance—and, again, I don't want to tell you by any stretch of the imagination that you have to stay any longer. But because we have some time, unless the committee tells me not to—and I can't see them doing that—I would invite you to stay, if other committee members have more questions, some more exchanges that people would want to participate in, and if you feel comfortable staying.

Mr McGuinty: Perhaps I could ask a question.

The Chair: Wait. I want to know if these people have a timetable.

Ms Maracle: The life of the people, as you know, doesn't end just at 5 or 6, so we're at your disposal for a little while.

Mr McGuinty: Just to pursue your sole recommendation, which is that you be exempt from the purview of OTAB, why could we not continue to maintain Bill 96 in its existing form? That is, it allows for the appointment of a director on the request of native groups. So you're not obligated in any way to participate in the program, are you?

Ms Maracle: Several thoughts come to mind. One is the notion of jurisdiction. At what point did the Constitution change the province's ability and authority to extend its purview over, for instance, Indians and lands reserved for Indians? There is an issue here from a very technical perspective, but there's more of an issue of an ethical question.

As the chair of the Aboriginal Intergovernmental Committee on Training, I've had the responsibility of going to some very large OTAB consultations and saying to the participants in their various committees and sectoral interests that we do not want to participate in their process and had people with very well-meaning intentions stand up from the women's community and say, "Gee, we have aboriginal women; we have every right to say something," from the disabled community stand up and say, "Gee, there are aboriginal disabled and we have every right to say something," and so on. Do you see?

At what point is the system going to legitimize the institutional development we've taken on ourselves, the fact that there exist aboriginal organizations in Ontario that have been given mandates, that people participate in, that have the right as the legitimate representatives of the aboriginal community to articulate what we want? How many times does our voice have to be expropriated? How many times would you let yours? I don't go out and speak for MPPs, in sympathy or solidarity. I don't speak for men who come from European descent. I don't speak for francophone women. I don't speak even for the aboriginal disabled. I ensure that there's a process where the different perspectives of our people can speak. I don't want to be expropriated any longer, by anybody, in whatever benevolent, kind, small-l liberal way people want to do. I want to be who the Creator made me to be and the

systems and the structures and the governments and the decision-making that we were given to apply to us consistently. That's why we don't want a reference, because some time we'll change our mind. I promise you, the leadership who are coming are a lot more assertive about who we are than I am and they're just waiting for me to mellow so they can move me out of the way and step into my moccasins.

Mr McGuinty: If you're mellow, I'd hate to see mean. You speak very eloquently and I hope the government members are listening and will respond to your request.

Mr Ramsay: They'll have the opportunity next week.

Ms Maracle: Exactly.

Mr Hugot: Thank you very much. I appreciate your presentation. I notice that during the dialogue in the last few minutes you mentioned that you're in the process of recovery and that training and development issues can help you in that recovery. I wonder if you could elaborate on that a bit in terms of this process of recovery and what exactly is taking place and what needs to be done to indeed help that recovery.

Ms Maracle: That's my specialty, and I didn't plant the questions. We speak very nicely to each other often, people who are in government and the aboriginal community. We're very polite. We don't use words like "colonization" and "racism." We don't use words like "economic despair." We don't talk about the family violence, the sexual assault, the alcohol and drugs, the disproportionate number of people incarcerated. We don't talk about the lack of ability of a foreign system that's been thrust on us to make decisions that will affect our lives: where I'll be buried, where my dog can be buried.

For a long time that external notion of civilizing aboriginal people, the lack of recognition that we were a magnificent people at the point of contact, that we were truly civilized in the way we related to each other, that we didn't have prisons, that we didn't have issues of directing male anger, all of those kinds of things that have been applied to us, eventually, over the course of the years and through the educational system, through the mass media, through our own despair, we began to internalize those, to believe them, to direct our negative energy, that sort of downward spiral that I spoke about earlier, towards ourselves, towards our own people who are not as powerful as perhaps we are.

We need to stop that. We need to begin to look at creating healthy relationships, relationships between men and women. At the point of contact, you have to remember, in treaty parties, the status of your own women in your own societies. They were chattels, their fathers decided who they would marry. I challenge you to tell your 15-year-old daughter today who she'll marry.

Mr Ramsay: Anything.

Ms Maracle: Exactly. So as part of our recovery we've had to look at what it is that we borrowed. What behaviour have we put on that's contributed to the point at which we find ourselves? It's not as simple as saying, "We have no land and we have no resources." We have no

self-esteem; we have no positive image of ourselves as aboriginal people and we need to create—one of the things the friendship centre really stresses in training is, let's develop the individual. Let's not make an engineer or a court worker or a this or that; let's talk about healing the person. Let's look at their physical issues—and that means sexual as well—let's look at their mental, their emotional and their spiritual issues, and if we can feed that, if we can find some good in who they are and feed that into them, that person will be able to look up and begin to take care of themselves, to participate in a meaningful way, to set directions about where they want to go.

How training can help is that it can be delivered in a culturally sensitive manner, that we don't sort of warehouse people when we send them back to retraining and upgrading courses in a massive college with thousands of students or 35 people in the room; that we can look at smaller community-based projects and initiatives to foster that development; that we can look at involving our elders and our traditional people; that we can do things in our own language and not feel the remnants of the residential schools where they were beaten for them, where they were taken away, where they were sent home summers. To this day, a reserve is not a desirable place to be paroled to. We don't get out on early parole, either in this province or in this country, if we're going back to a reserve, because that's not considered a healthy environment.

We've got all of these kinds of issues to deal with and if you don't have a roof over your head, you don't have a job, you don't have food on the table, and you can't clothe your own child, you don't get that sense of worth, of who I am, of who I can be, that magnificent human being, that Sonkwaiatison, the Creator; the great mystery instructed that we would walk. Nobody can give that to us. You can get obstacles out of the way. You can keep legislation from tying our hands, you can look at resourcing in a real sense so we can make up the fact that we're not even in the race. We're not even at the starting blocks. We don't even know what starting blocks are and where the race is going.

That kind of development and that kind of removing barriers, of not letting people say, "Gee, I know what's good for aboriginal people; I know one." We call that in our community "favourite Indian syndrome" and I'm very pleased to say I'm nobody's favourite Indian. They don't call me up and say, "Sylvia said."

It's that kind of notion of wellness, of recovery that I'm talking about and we have to do that from a variety of ways. We have to certainly attack violence in our community; we've got to attack addictions in our community—and I'm not just talking about reserve communities; I'm talking about urban communities. We have to look at employment and training that prepares people to take their place in a very short time and feel like they are citizens, that they are contributing in this province, that they're part of it and that they're important. I think those are some ideas of what I'm talking about recovering from and where we'd like to go.

The Chair: Please let me thank you, Ms LaCaille, Ms Maracle, Mr Thompson for spending time with us this afternoon. You've been effective spokespersons on behalf

of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. You have clearly prompted some great interest on the part of the members of the committee and we are grateful to you. We hope you will keep in touch either with individual members or with the committee as a group, and that you'll be watching this legislation as it goes through committee

and on into third reading. Thank you kindly, people. Take care. Have safe trips back home.

It's 5:55 pm. There are no other participants appearing today and we will therefore adjourn until tomorrow at 10 am. Thank you kindly.

The committee adjourned at 1755.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

***Chair / Président:** Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold ND)

***Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

Conway, Sean G. (Renfrew North/-Nord L)

Dadamo, George (Windsor-Sandwich ND)

Jordan, Leo (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Klopp, Paul (Huron ND)

*McGuinty, Dalton (Ottawa South/-Sud L)

Murdock, Sharon (Sudbury ND)

*Offer, Steven (Mississauga North/-Nord L)

*Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

*Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)

*In attendance / présents

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Farnan, Mike (Cambridge ND) for Ms Murdock

Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South/-Sud PC) for Mr Jordan

Martin, Tony (Sault Ste Marie ND) for Mr Waters

Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway

Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Dadamo

Villeneuve, Noble (S-D-G & East Grenville/S-D-G & Grenville-Est PC) for Mr Jordan

Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Klopp

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:

Hansen, Ron (Lincoln ND)

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Anderson, Anne, research officer, Legislative Research Service

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Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and
Adjustment Board Act, 1993

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième intersession, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 17 février 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre

Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Wednesday 17 February 1993

The committee met at 1002 in room 151.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

ONTARIO NATIVE LITERACY COALITION

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 10 o'clock. We're scheduled to begin. The first participant this morning is the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition. Sir, please tell us name, your position or title, if any, and proceed with what you've got to tell us, saving, if you will, the last 15 minutes for questions and exchanges, although the half-hour is yours to do with as you wish.

Mr Doug Anderson: [Remarks in native language]

My name is Doug Anderson. I come from Ottawa. I represent the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition. I'm on the board of directors. I've been asked to present some of our concerns to the standing committee on Bill 96. I also coordinate a program in Toronto at St Clair and Vaughan Road.

The Ontario Native Literacy Coalition was formed in 1987 to unify native literacy programs in the province at that time. We now actively support and offer training to 33 programs across Ontario with the network, including programs in native communities, friendship centres and special interest groups.

We are here today to react to the federal-provincial restructuring initiative that will result in the creation of the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. While aware that no final decision has been made as to the future of literacy programs within OTAB, it was felt that an opportunity to offer reasons against such a move was needed at this time.

In the initial review of the text in Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership for Ontario, we found the following immediate concerns over this transfer enterprise:

(a) There was little or no consultation with all native interest groups on this impending change.

(b) The objectives for literacy, as described by OTAB, will be bilingualism, retraining and job-specific development, computer literacy, institutionalized training favouring use of colleges, and distance education through electronic media.

(c) The proposal to provide a qualitative assessment of all literacy programs and introduce standardized testing—ie, grade 8—that would eliminate the one-to-one relationship with present clients and reintroduce a classroom-style setting that failed in the first place.

(d) The appearance that OTAB's primary focus is labour-related and would concentrate on retraining and skills development, which would obviously not place a high importance on literacy as those working in the field these last five years have come to recognize it.

(e) No new money has been identified in the proposal. Therefore, there may be a consolidation of provincial ministry funds to meet OTAB's objectives. This will mean reductions or elimination of some programs.

As the representative of the native literacy programs, we carry with us the added concern around what the statement of political relations could mean for our programs. We are aware that discussions have been taking place with AICOT, the Aboriginal Intergovernmental Committee on Training, but again there seems to be no established relationship and no word if it will be identified as a transfer agency for native literacy dollars. While we have approached AICOT and received its support, its background is mainly in training initiatives—ie, Pathways—and it is felt that no other group but the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition can best represent the concerns of native literacy programs.

Native literacy programs view literacy as an integral part of self-determination and the renaissance of native language and culture, a more positive and powerful self-image that will in turn empower the community. This impending shift regarding literacy has made an already unstable environment even more threatening to the further development of our programs. In order to protect this development, the ONLC is presently working towards the establishment of an Ontario native literacy foundation.

In closing, we wish to make it clear that the native literacy programs do not believe that a transfer into the crown corporation of OTAB would be the most beneficial move, and encourage a decision to have literacy remain within the Ministry of Education literacy branch. Thank you. Meegwetch. I'll just say I'll leave it open to answer questions as best I can.

The Chair: I'm sure there are going to be questions and comments.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Welcome. Thank you for your presentation. We've had several native groups come before us in the last couple of days—there are still a few yet to come—and we've received a couple of recommendations that, on the face of it, appear to be quite startling; that is, to be omitted entirely from the OTAB process. Now, as you know from the legislation, it's just permissive in the legislation to say that if native groups want to be part of it they can basically petition the minister and the minister can appoint a native representative on OTAB. It's not as if native people are in there right now, but the legislation allows that to happen at a future date. But people have come to us and said: "Just take that out. We've got our own system."

As an opposition member and the critic for the Liberal caucus, I'm in a position to move amendments to try to better the legislation. My job is to listen to people like you who come before us and to pick up your advice. I've received lots of good advice, and that will be reflected in amendments. I'm just a little reluctant to bring forward an amendment to take out, not for all time but for the life of this bill anyway, that permission for native people to be part of this, without knowing a little more about the future of your programs.

Pathways to Success, which you and other groups have mentioned, looks to be a fabulous program, but I'd like to ask, do you think you're going to have that for the next few years and it should be sufficient, so that you would therefore chance it that you would not be part of OTAB; or is the federal government going to get rid of that program, as they are the CITCs in the non-native community, the community industrial training committees, because everything's going to be rolled into these LTABs, local boards?

Mr Anderson: It'll take me a while to answer that one. I can only answer it from my personal experience. I'm not sure if I got the question clearly.

Mr Ramsay: I can just summarize it. Do you want to be part of OTAB? Do you want the possibility of that? Most native groups are saying no, they've got their own separate track. Right now it's Pathways to Success—they really like that—and other programs. Do you want to be out of this entirely and delete any reference to native people being part of OTAB?

1010

Mr Anderson: I think that's what we're saying, yes. To give an example, again from my personal experience, we run a very small program out of a native agency in Toronto and we have a very small budget, although we've done a lot of fund-raising and things are looking up. We're looking into working in a partnership with the city of Toronto, for instance.

At the beginning, it was apparent to me that I couldn't take care of people's learning needs as completely and comprehensively as they might have wished. I was inclined to try to refer them into existing programs, for instance, at one of the community colleges in town, where they actually had a native outreach program and a native counsellor working within the institution. What actually happens is that I think the person becomes accountable to the institution as opposed to the native community.

Where we're coming from, and where this whole approach is coming from, is probably that our people need to be in control of a lot more than just being a representative of native people within another organization, another branch of government or another institution; that we're in need of developing our own curriculum, of developing our own language classes. I could go on and on, but that's the idea.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I'd like to ask a few questions on your presentation, because I'm getting that sense from a number of people who are coming to this committee. They recognize OTAB, but they also

recognize that maybe they don't want to be in OTAB. Their position is, "Listen, I don't want to be part of an organization, no matter what its goals may be, that conscripts me without any voice, without any say, and which might, in effect, harm some of the programs and activities that have been built up over the past." That's what I hear, somewhat, from your presentation, that you've got your programs, you've got a certain structure, you don't want to be brought into another agency, OTAB, in which you're not going to have any say—and you're not going to have any say. The bill is clear; you're not.

I know there must be a great many federal and shared provincial-federal programs. What provincial programs would you access in the area of training or literacy?

Mr Anderson: The programs I'm familiar with have accessed mainly the Ministry of Education literacy branch—

Mr Offer: I thank you for that answer because—

The Chair: Maybe he wanted to finish it, though. Did you want to finish that, Mr Anderson? Go ahead.

Mr Anderson: Yes, because there's a lot more. In my own program that I'm coordinating, we've accessed funds from the United Way, we've accessed funds from the city of Toronto, we've accessed funds from the secretary of state, we've accessed funds from various—there are a lot of small-time attempts at fund-raising that aren't that successful, and presently I'm looking into trying to work in partnership with the Toronto Board of Education in sharing space; I'm talking with them about that. There are also other programs, maybe using certain computer programs; we may have bought into something like that. I can't speak too much to the concept of the Ontario Native Literacy foundation that is in the stages of being researched right now. I think the idea is that they want to begin to consolidate, as much as possible, fund-raising and that kind of thing and to bring together ideas, at least in that respect.

Mr Offer: As you've gone on in your answer, I appreciate that. You'll know we can only be, in the main, concerned with the provincial programs. One you brought forward was the Ministry of Education, the community literacy program. It's interesting: I have a briefing from the ministry which says there is no decision that that's going to be part of OTAB; that's a program they're going to review further.

In one way, I think it meets the concern that you don't want to be part of OTAB. This briefing note indicates that it's not even slated to be part of OTAB, so maybe your concern has been met, but it raises another point: The government has put out the perception that OTAB is the be-all and end-all to all persons, and that just isn't going to be the case. A lot of programs are not going to be part of OTAB: Some of this imagined coordination and concentration just isn't going to be the case. In a strange way, the fact that the program you are mainly interested in is not going to be part of OTAB may in fact help you in terms of your position that you don't want to be part of OTAB.

Mr Anderson: As I said earlier, we are aware that no final decisions have been made on the future of literacy programs. At this point we're just offering reasons against that move being made, at least in our case. Again, I don't

claim to be speaking for other community literacy programs at all.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): Thank you very much for the presentation. I don't know if you're aware of this, but in my riding there are a large number of reserves and friendship centres. Some of them made presentations yesterday from the Moosonee-Moose Factory area, as well as the friendship centre speaking on behalf of the 26 friendship centres across Ontario. Some of their concerns are the same as what you've brought forward, that the language is very important, that the literacy and training programs be done in the aboriginal language, whether it be Cree or Inuit or whatever other language.

You're saying that even though the government has training programs in 10 ministries and about 48 programs, your argument is that you'd like to be left out of OTAB. You don't want the gathering of these to include, in this particular case, the literacy training program or any other training programs?

Mr Anderson: Again, I would hesitate to make it something like, "This is it," because I've been asked to say today, on behalf of the ONLC, that we have an opportunity here to offer reasons against the move and to express concerns over the transfer.

Something I should say is that in my experience with the people I've referred to apprenticeship programs or various upgrading programs within mainstream institutions, I guess you could call them, there's a sense of cultural alienation. I've been told by people working within one particular community college that the dropout rate of native adults who've decided to go into upgrading—people who have had to cope with having had an inadequate education all their lives and have made the decision to go back—is over 80%. I think it's compounded by a lot of other problems, but I also think it may have to do with there not being a sense of really knowing what it is that's sometimes needed for our people.

Mr Wood: Once again, in the north and especially in my riding, in the Cochrane-New Post first nation area, in the Hearst area, Constance Lake area, good cooperation has developed with the economic development boards in trying to diversify the economy, and the aboriginal groups are involved as full partners on these boards. I'm curious as to what your feeling would be about being involved in the local boards, and working this in as economic development and retraining and things of this kind in the northern part of the province.

1020

Mr Anderson: These questions are hard for me to answer, because there's so much going on at this point within the first nations communities and councils and so forth, and that's not even thinking about the transfers and reorganizations or whatever is going on at government level. I don't think I could claim to answer that question at this point. There are a lot of questions around self-government that haven't been resolved. God knows, it may take generations.

Mr Wood: And there are different issues: on-reserve and off-reserve and status natives and non-status natives.

Mr Anderson: In my experience, most of us are interested in working. No one is saying that we want to cut ourselves off from the mainstream community. My main focus and my main interest is in helping people to be able to survive anywhere. I'm not interested in setting up some secluded community so much as helping our people in a way that suits them best to have the skills to survive without sacrificing their own culture and the sense of who they are.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Thanks a lot, Doug, for your presentation. It has certainly raised a lot of issues that I think are going to help us in our deliberations.

Through these deliberations and even probably this morning, you've gathered that it's not always clear just what is happening. We have to evaluate what we're hearing, and one of the things you heard today from Mr Offer was that our government is setting out OTAB as the be-all and the end-all for Ontario's future, that everything that's going to happen from here on in will be affected by OTAB. OTAB, after all, is an acronym for Ontario Training and Adjustment Board and really speaks to training issues, because there's been a perception—you might share it yourself—that training can be improved in Ontario. That's what we're trying to do by bringing together the labour market partners to make these decisions about how training should be met and how it can be improved in the province.

To do that, we've consulted with all groups interested in training, including aboriginal communities through the aboriginal intergovernmental committee on training, or AICOT, and we've heard various views. You yourself have suggested that all these questions haven't been answered and will depend on future discussion. In the legislation, the possibility of a representative from the aboriginal community is stated just that way: If that's the way the discussions lead, that the training of the aboriginal communities can best be met by having a representative on the board, then that's what will happen. But it still requires the consultation and the participation of groups like the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition to say what your interests are, and already we've heard that you are meeting literacy needs.

I would like to focus on your perception of how literacy programs can be coordinated with programs OTAB will be providing so that with the jobs your clients will be going into, there can be the coordination that will best lead to that kind of arrangement.

Mr Anderson: I'll try, in five minutes.

Mr Gary Wilson: Take your time. We have enough time to discuss this one.

Mr Anderson: It may involve working with trainers in specific areas where we may not be able to provide instructors. For instance, it may involve bringing them into a setting that's under our control, in a sense; that we have some control over the learning environment, possibly over helping people to understand just what is required in teaching in the native community. It may involve partnerships. It would involve so much that it's hard to say.

Mr Gary Wilson: Perhaps you can start with what you're doing now: What's on a typical program you're

carrying out now, and what contact have you got with the workplace?

Mr Anderson: For instance, we have one individual who is in a carpentry apprenticeship. I think a lot of things tend to happen, and often our people's interests aren't looked out for. It's not that people are maliciously trying to abuse their rights, but they get caught up in institutions that really aren't looking out for their interests. I think a lot of colleges and universities exist to get money, and then people can get money from their band councils to go to college. They may not be ready—

Mr Gary Wilson: Ready in what way?

Mr Anderson: Literacy-wise. They may not be ready to handle the material. At this point, there isn't really a partnership going on, but we're working sometimes in tandem with people who are in existing programs in the community colleges or what have you, and we're trying to help them through that experience. I've gone in to meet with instructors to give them a sense of what kind of patterns or methods of communication they might encounter that they might not understand. It's hard to explain.

Mr Gary Wilson: It's almost like an advocacy role, then.

Mr Anderson: At this point, that's what I'm doing. I can't speak for other programs. I know there are programs that use different methods. Pathways is one that we don't use, but other people do.

Mr Gary Wilson: And of course OTAB has no effect on Pathways at all; it's a separate program. I think you're saying that the training could proceed better if the trainers were aware of the special needs of the people you serve.

Mr Anderson: That's one thing that can have an effect, yes, a positive impact. What we try to do is provide support to people in areas that aren't really taken care of in institutions, and until our own training institutions are developed—that's a whole other question, but until that happens, I see that as being part of my role, to help them and to advocate.

Mr Gary Wilson: So the cooperative and consultative model that OTAB is based on would serve that purpose, wouldn't it? People around the table could find out what the various views are about how the training is being provided for the people they represent.

Mr Anderson: Yes, that could happen. There are so many concerns we're talking about. That's not the main area we're concerned about. The bilingualism is a concern.

Mr Gary Wilson: In what way?

Mr Anderson: In the sense that for me and for people I'm working with, it's more of a concern for us to retain our own languages; we see that as being something more essential for us. Whether we're speaking English or French, both of those should be the second languages. For many people, especially in the more northern communities, they are the second languages.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. I'm going to tell you, Mr Anderson, that you've made a valuable contribution to the committee's process. You've provided some interesting and new insights, obviously, and that's reflected in the

conversation you've had with committee members. You've provoked them, and that's a good thing. We thank you sincerely for taking the time to attend and share your views. We trust you'll be keeping in touch if you have more things to say, either to individual members or to the committee as a whole. Thank you kindly. You're welcome to stay. You might find the next presentation from the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario of some interest.

1030

The Chair: Would that next participant please come forward. I want to remind people that these are public hearings. Here we are at Queen's Park in the Amethyst Room, ground floor. In view of the fact that the Legislature isn't sitting, there is some parking available, and there's the best free coffee in all of Toronto; I'm surprised Toronto Life hasn't done an article on that yet. People are entitled to come here as of right and enjoy the free coffee and beverages. I invite people who find this to be an otherwise cold and slushy day to come and listen to the committee work and to partake of those refreshments.

People, please be seated. Ms Cunningham, don't foul up the schedule, please. I'm doing my best to keep us on time.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): I've got to get on record here. Good morning, Mr Kormos.

The Chair: Good morning, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: It's good to see you in such a jovial mood today.

The Chair: Well, here we are. All of us are in fine spirits, the weather being what it is. I know that you, driving in from London today, had to struggle with some less than ideal circumstances, so it's nice to see you here.

People, please go ahead. Tell us who you are, your titles and your schools, and proceed with your comments. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for questions and exchanges.

ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES OF APPLIED ARTS AND TECHNOLOGY OF ONTARIO

Ms Catherine Henderson: Good morning. My name's Cathy Henderson, and I'm the president of Centennial College in Scarborough. With me are Dan Patterson, who's the vice-president of Ventures at Niagara College, and Tom Evans, director of training at ACAATO.

The Chair: That's Niagara College in the Niagara Peninsula; Welland, St Catharines.

Ms Catherine Henderson: I'm going to begin with just a brief summary and then have my colleagues fill in a few details, and we will stop for questions after 15 minutes.

The purpose of our presentation this morning is to respond to Bill 96 on behalf of the colleges of applied arts and technology of Ontario. As key stakeholders, the colleges have a sincere desire and significant interest in assisting the refashioning of Ontario's training and adjustment system.

The presentation this morning will cover four main areas; first, the present role and capacities of the community colleges in Ontario. This role has changed from a

narrow delivery of post-secondary two- and three-year diploma programs to a broad, market-responsive mix of training and education services.

Second, in the area of partnership development, we recommend that with 25 years of community development and partnership management with various community stakeholders, community colleges take a leadership role in facilitating the aims and objectives of Bill 96 with all labour market partners. The college system's history of community and provincial consultation and our broad range of private sector contacts makes this a logical and appropriate step.

Third, within the context of access, accountability and quality, we recommend the addition of two objectives: first, to establish, in collaboration with stakeholders and appropriate experts, a set of criteria and processes through which any trainer providing publicly funded training must become accredited; second, to develop, in collaboration with stakeholders and the college standards and accreditation council, a province-wide system of credentialed labour force development programs which can be delivered by accredited trainers.

The Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology strongly endorse the commitment to access, quality and accountability which is reflected in Bill 96. A key component in meeting these commitments will be the development of curriculum standards and portability in training. These elements are the strengths of the college system and should be built upon in any new training and adjustment environment.

Fourth, in forging links between labour force development initiatives and economic and social policy, we recommend that a process be established to provide stakeholders the opportunity to review and comment on the regulations governing this act prior to these regulations being adopted; and second, that community colleges, as key stakeholders in training and labour force development, in order to maximize their flexibility be provided the opportunity to review and recommend appropriate changes to these regulations prior to their being finalized.

Two of the critical outcomes of Bill 96 are the definition through regulations of the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities of the local boards, and the partnership with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board regarding federal programs and funding.

Given the essential role of province-wide standards and provincial accreditation systems for programs and trainers, these must not be jeopardized by unregulated decentralization of program control to local boards. Similarly, a balance of centralized and decentralized responsibilities and accountabilities can be achieved by delegating assignments and training resources from OTAB to local boards.

Our purpose in this presentation is to offer you the support, the experience and the many, many assets of the community colleges as one of the cornerstones of the province's training and adjustment system. On a personal note, I would suggest to you that our tale is more eloquently told by the 400,000 full- and part-time students with us right now by choice.

I'll turn this over now to Tom Evans from ACAATO.

Mr Tom Evans: I'd like to spend a moment to give you an idea of what the colleges are, their mandate and the scope of some of their activity.

The Ontario colleges of applied arts and technology were established in 1967 as an essential underpinning of the province's training and education infrastructure. Their primary functions may be summarized as: to provide programs and services in the English and French languages to adults and youth seeking enhanced skills for re-entry to the labour market, to provide community development expertise and labour market adjustment services to individuals and groups in communities across Ontario, and to provide an alternative forum for the delivery of high-quality skills training and education services to adults and high school graduates at the post-secondary level in the English and French languages.

At the present time, there are 23 community colleges with 96 campuses in 55 communities. These colleges offer 1,700 programs and employ in excess of 17,000 people. In this last year, enrolment exceeded 123,000 full-time post-secondary students and another 60,000 full-time adult training students. Part-time course registrations exceeded 1.5 million, including commercial and corporate trainees. More than 70% of the adult training activity in this province is provided through the community colleges.

Direct entrants from the secondary school system account for 55% of our present student population. The second-largest group of students are adults coming from the labour force. This group now comprises approximately 33% of our student population and has been growing steadily over the past five years. The system-wide average age of college students is 26 years. Our other sources of students account for 16% of our enrolment, of which 5% are former university graduates.

Since the inception of the community college system, they have consistently consulted with a variety of community groups to provide the most relevant programs and services in the communities served by each college. A system of program advisory committees was established, comprised of several thousand community leaders from business, labour and other stakeholder constituencies. The high-quality training infrastructure which is the community college system has been developed on the foundation of these advisory committees and support from both the federal and provincial governments.

As crown agencies, community colleges are instrumental in the implementation of the government's social and economic policies. The college system is unique in its capacity to deliver province-wide certification of skills, programs and trainers in a flexible system of prior learning assessment and accreditation.

Community colleges realize that the dramatic changes occurring throughout the world are affecting our students and respective communities and that global markets are a reality. Community colleges have been and continue to be part of the exciting restructuring and reorientation to new business strategies. Each year, approximately 25% of college programs are reviewed and updated as required.

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It is fitting that this year, which is the 25th anniversary of the Ontario community college system, the Ontario training and adjustment board is expected to be formalized. We believe that our track record of supporting growth and delivering quality services positions the colleges to contribute substantially in the new training environment. Community colleges look forward to more fully utilizing a comprehensive, full-service mandate, where each college functions as an education institution, a training delivery agent and a community player.

Colleges have positioned themselves to serve the skills-upgrading demands of the labour force in the open marketplace. In addition to serving over 500,000 adult trainees, significant progress has been made by colleges in serving specific employers or industrial sectors and individuals.

Colleges realize that competitiveness requires market-driven quality, as defined by the client, at a cost-competitive price to meet client needs. Colleges will provide support to the OTAB governors as they forge a farsighted yet obtainable vision for Ontario's training and adjustment system.

I'd like to stop here and turn it over to my colleague Dan Patterson.

Mr Dan Patterson: I'm Dan Patterson, vice-president, Niagara College. What I'd like to do is to cite four key objectives of Bill 96 and speak to those items. Bill 96 cites four key objectives: to include all labour market partners in public training; to give employers, workers and potential workers access to training; to reinforce the principle of access, equity and efficiency in labour market development; and to harmonize labour force development programs with the province's economic and social policies.

I would now like to talk under three broad headings: partnership development, access and accountability, and labour force development in economic and social policy.

The first one speaks to the issue of partnership. One of the things I think that's most critical when we talk about OTAB is the transfer of power, because at the heart of OTAB is the transfer of power and decision-making out of government into the hands of the labour market partners; that's labour, industry, education and social action groups. Bill 96 speaks to the issue of shared leadership, and I think it's very critical to the success of OTAB that we not come with self-interest but talk about how we can work in a consensus kind of way. I think it's absolutely crucial and at the heart of OTAB. So what we believe we bring to the table in terms of partnership are a number of important components, and we'd like to share those with you.

We have a community base with local responsiveness and formal input from both economic and social groups within our college catchment areas. We have a cohesive provincial structure which facilitates communication, province-wide standards and consistent learning outcomes. So rather than having 23 different presentations to this group, we've come under the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, and the document included in your package is a result of extensive consultation with

the 23 community college leaders in identifying and responding to OTAB.

We offer a comprehensive, full-service mandate: Each college functions as an educational institution, a training delivery agent and a community player, with extensive linkages among all major labour market partners; the mandate and capacity to act as both an economic and social policy instrument of government; expertise and experience in needs assessments and training plan development for individuals and organizations; curriculum and training material development; and the capacity to deliver province-wide certification of skills programs and a flexible system of prior learning assessment and accreditation.

Examples abound in the college system. Niagara College's Environmental Centre works with industry associations in providing leading edge upskilling for the workforce. The Canadian Plastics Centre at Humber College involves industry, labour, education and government in supporting international competitiveness of the sector. The Canadian Automotive Institute at Georgian College, a college-industry partnership, provides professional training for the automotive industry. Mohawk College, the United Steelworkers of America and Stelco have initiated a long-term, multi-skilling program for workers in Hamilton. These are just examples of a number of excellent programs and partnerships we have.

The second area I want to focus on is access, accountability and quality. We recommend the addition of two objectives as part of section 4 of Bill 96.

First, we believe we should establish, in collaboration with stakeholders and appropriate experts, a set of criteria and processes through which any trainer providing publicly funded training must become accredited.

"4(1)20. To develop, in collaboration with stakeholders and the college standards and accreditation council, a province-wide system of credentialed labour market development programs which can be delivered by accredited trainers as defined in paragraph 19."

We believe standardized outcomes for publicly sponsored training programs are essential for cost-effectiveness and quality assurance. We believe portability through a common accreditation system is a firm guarantor of access and equity. These elements are the strength of the college system and should be built upon in any new training and adjustment environment. OTAB's objectives cannot be met unless all trainers supplying services under publicly funded programs participate in these efforts.

Under the final section, under labour force development and economic and social policy, it is recommended that:

(1) A process be established to provide stakeholders the opportunity to review and comment on regulations governing this act prior to these regulations being adopted.

(2) Community colleges, as key stakeholders in training and labour force development, in order to maximize their flexibility, be provided the opportunity to review and recommend necessary changes to these regulations prior to them being finalized.

Bill 96 is intended, in part, to ensure that labour force development programs and services are consistent with government's economic and social policies. Two critical

OTAB relationships which will bear directly on this objective are not well defined: the role, the responsibilities and accountabilities of local boards, and the partnerships with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board regarding federal programs and funding.

High-quality standards and the ability to reinforce those standards must not be jeopardized by unregulated decentralization of program control to local boards. A strong partnership with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board is essential. The local boards would receive assignments and the necessary training resources directly from one centralized provincial body, the OTAB governing body.

The government of Ontario is committed to sharing the leadership in rebuilding the economy of this province with all its labour market partners. To achieve this rebuilding, all stakeholders should be heavily involved in the decision-making of all the regulations that are to follow, and we urge the government to continue its consultation process throughout the regulation development phase.

To date, we've been appreciative of the OTAB project group, which has been very available to help us in our consultation process. I know that in the Niagara region alone they've come down three or four times: a lot of heated debates, a lot of discussions at the local level about this historic transformation and the major changes that are being proposed. I know the OTAB project group has helped us, and we appreciate that very much.

We'd just like to conclude by indicating that we think the shared leadership is absolutely crucial, that we need to work together, that the colleges worked very hard in building and making those links with our networks. As the president of Centennial College has mentioned, we are here in the long run, and we're going to be here for the long run: We've had 25 years of working with the community. We realize OTAB should take into consideration and build on the strengths of the college system, and when we feel that things need improving, then we're ready to work with our various partners to improve them.

I'd like to thank you very much for the opportunity of presenting with my colleagues today.

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The Chair: Ms Marland, three minutes per caucus, please.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): How many minutes?

The Chair: Three. It's really three and a half, but I said three, knowing you'll take them.

Mrs Cunningham: We'll take five if you're not looking.

The Chair: I'll be looking.

Mrs Marland: In fairness to the critic, I want to be very expedient. Speaking as someone who's proud to have President Mary Hofstetter's wonderful Sheridan College campuses, some of which are in my riding, are you satisfied that the consultations prior to the drafting of the legislation involved you sufficiently? I know you can't be satisfied with the representation in the end, but were you satisfied with the pre-consultation before the draft?

Mr Patterson: Yes, generally speaking. Every time we called at our local level to bring in resources, they participated. It's difficult to draw the line when you actually stop consultation, but speaking for the Niagara region there were a number of opportunities where key stakeholders did come together. I still think there's a lot of work that needs to be done in building partnerships. I think partnerships take time, and I think those four groups, the labour market partners, have not historically worked together. I think there's still the positioning and a bit of one-upmanship that everyone indeed is concerned about. But given the time frames and the fact that as a jurisdiction we are in deep trouble if we don't make some major changes in the way we position for the 21st century, while we don't agree with all the recommendations in OTAB, we think there are a lot of good principles taken from other jurisdictions that have good track records and success in training to try to build on. There are shortcomings, but we have had the opportunity, through various mechanisms, to respond.

Mrs Cunningham: I have a very direct question. The other education representatives—whether school boards, the universities or private and public trainers—have all stated to us that they feel the education community is underrepresented on the OTAB itself. They have gone as far as asking for five seats; some have asked for eight. They feel you people are the ones who will make certain that people are trained in the business community, within the labour market workplaces and obviously within education and public and private trainers. You haven't mentioned that, and I'm just wondering if you have a position on that.

Mr Patterson: Yes, this is an issue that we have very much struggled with. In our document *The Challenge...Training and Adjustment Renewal for Ontario: The Response...A New Role for The Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology*, we do recommend that the colleges have a seat on the board. But as we got involved in the consultation, we felt we should be less preoccupied with seats and being a power broker and more concerned with the degree to which education expertise can come to bear on the drivers of training, like labour and management. As we developed, we recognized that the emphasis should be more on consensus with the four labour partners, rather than that we need two, four or five representations.

Suppose a college representative were going to be on the board: We would expect that that college representative not just come in with the college interest in mind but come in with the total education and training development of the province in mind, recognizing that there are school boards, universities, private sector groups and community groups that all have a stake. One of the things that has most frustrated us is the sense that some people think that we're in to try to have the colleges be the total picture. That's not our intent. We very much believe that we have to do it through partnerships with others.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much for such a comprehensive, dynamic and, I would say, ultimately sympathetic presentation, sympathetic to the ideals of OTAB. I'd like to say too that it reflects the work of St Lawrence College in my riding. Building on that tradition, its new

president, Dan Corbett, has some very exciting ideas about how to carry forward into the future the work that has gone on in the past 25 years in areas like training but also other duties and mandate of the colleges.

I want to ask you, though, in the brief time you have—in a way that's regrettable, but at the same time you have presented very clearly the colleges' view of OTAB—about the local boards. We've heard from some groups that they think the local boards should be all-powerful, I think at the expense of the provincial board. You made a comment about that, suggesting that we have to be careful about that balance between the provincial OTAB and the local boards. I was wondering if you could elaborate on some of your concerns there, about how that balance will be achieved and how it should be met.

Ms Catherine Henderson: The balance is essential, in my view, and that comes from working personally with Dan and others at provincial and local levels. It's hard, until one does it, to get an understanding of the differences between the local areas. People are always on the backs of presidents saying: "Why can't they get their act together and respond as a unit?" Because we come from different places, and they're significantly different.

We do need overarching principles and guidelines and operating practices, in my view, but these need to be consistent with local decisions: There are a number of unique local decisions I really believe we have to make. I don't know the mechanism; Dan may be more prepared to speak about a mechanism for doing that, but I can only say that we, as a group of colleges, think it's extremely important.

Mr Evans: I could add too that one of the things we saw OTAB doing was to reduce the amount of duplication. We would like to see a centralized governing body directing local boards, but at the same time leaving enough flexibility for the local boards to respond to local needs. Otherwise, I think we'd have a very disjointed type of training system in our province.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think that's what we are trying to do, because there's a lot of expertise at the local level. But if it's felt to be ignored, then it won't come forward and the system will suffer because of that.

Mr Evans: Yes. There has to be room for that to surface.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to pursue Mrs Cunningham's question with you, because I would like to get a little more direct response. Do you think the other training partners should be on OTAB? Yes or no.

The Chair: Or however you may want to answer it.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to hear yes or no.

Mr Evans: The representation on the board should be done by constituency. You mean, would each of the other sectors have a seat?

Mr Ramsay: Yes, the five—

Mr Evans: I don't think it's necessary to have every sector represented on the board.

Mr Ramsay: I see. Why should you be there and not somebody else?

Mr Evans: We're there in the sense that—we're not being represented as a system. One of our former colleagues happened to be nominated by the constituency, so he now is a representative of the five education and training sectors, not the community college.

Mr Ramsay: But what would be wrong with having a representative from each of the five training sectors out there so we know we've got good input into OTAB decision-making?

Mr Evans: If it were the wish of the board and the government to expand the membership of that committee, sure: We would love to have our own seat. But given the reality that there were only two education and training seats, I really think it has to be done by constituency. There are a lot of very good trainers out there.

Mr Ramsay: Absolutely; for sure. The thing I think you need to worry about is, how are you guaranteed that you would always have a seat there?

Mr Evans: We're not.

Mr Ramsay: No, you're not at all. So really, on your behalf, it would be better to make sure all five components of trainers out there have a place at the table, that we put that in the legislation and then you know you'd always have a seat for colleges.

Mr Evans: I think we are part of the education and training sector or constituency. There is expertise out there with the community-based trainers and some with the private trainers; the colleges have their own niche; the universities have their niche. We're one of five.

Mr Ramsay: I'm a little surprised that you—I take from your submission that you really want a fairly highly centralized organization. To quote, "The training programs and the province-wide accreditation must not be jeopardized by unregulated decentralization of program control to local boards." That's fairly strong language, so you're looking for quite a highly centralized control of OTAB. I'm just wondering if you could expand a little more on why you want it so centralized.

Ms Catherine Henderson: I was on the establishment board for the college standards and accreditation group, and that argument rages. I think what we're looking at is centralization around quality and standards, as opposed to the actual content and delivery in the local areas. What we're trying to ensure is that if you're trained by an accredited provider of training, you have some assurance of quality, affordability and consistency of what that would mean. That's what decentralization is about, not the content.

Mr Ramsay: So the local boards should be free to pursue the training programs they want, as long as there are standards there.

Ms Catherine Henderson: It's really necessary.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Henderson, Mr Evans and Mr Patterson for this participation in the committee process. We are grateful to you. We thank you for travelling to Queen's Park today, obviously from different parts of the community and the province, but we're appreciative of the point of view you've expressed and your willingness to

share that with us. Thank you kindly. Have a safe trip back to Welland, St Catharines and Niagara Falls.

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WOMEN'S TRAINING COALITION
(NORTH SUPERIOR)

The Chair: The next participant is the Women's Training Coalition (North Superior). Please tell us your name and any title or position you've got. We've got your written material, which will become part of the record by virtue of being filed as an exhibit. Please try to give us the second 15 minutes of your half-hour for questions and conversation.

Ms Joan Baril: My name is Joan Baril, and I represent the Women's Training Coalition, the training area called North Superior. Thank you very much for letting me speak to you today about Bill 96.

When you hold Bill 96 in your hand, it's a very short bill; it's just a piece of paper. It's a very administrative and a very bureaucratic piece of paper. You know it's important, but I'm guessing that you know it's important in a rather remote way from the people who are actually going to take this training. I would like to give you two specific examples of how this new training initiative will improve and will affect positive training, especially in the north.

This bill sets the stage at the local level for a cooperative partnership between federal and provincial training. Where I come from, the fragmentation of training and of various training boards is a major problem. In general, there is a lack of training in the north, and we could use some cooperative effort to solve these problems.

I come from Thunder Bay, but I represent the women's group in the training area called North Superior. This is an enormous area, running from the west of Thunder Bay over to Manitouwadge and north for ever, pretty well. It represents—please think of this—an area half the size of France. It represents an area that is the same size as southern Ontario. It represents the common northern expression when people phone down to Toronto: "Turn over the map."

In order to prepare for this presentation, I travelled the north shore. If you've ever done that in the winter, you know what it's like. I just finished that trip, 600 kilometres. I went to five northern towns: Manitouwadge, Marathon, Nipigon, Geraldton and Terrace Bay. I met with interested women in those communities; we had ads in the paper. There were public meetings for women interested in training, and I talked to about 44 women. I also visited training programs, college programs and school board programs in the north. I did this on behalf of our Women's Training Coalition (North Superior), which is a recently formed group, as you can imagine. We are affiliated with the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition.

This trip taught me a lot about the north. It's a very different world up there. I want to share some of the things that happened to me. No, I didn't get hit by a moose—almost, though. It taught me that the north represents a different economy, a different geography, a different climate and a different attitude, that these realities have a very crucial bearing on training and that they also should be recognized in this bill.

I'd like to tell you what I learned. I left Thunder Bay on January 27, drove 200 kilometres to Geraldton and met with 15 women, anglophone and francophone. I then drove 100 kilometres to the next town, which is Nipigon. The next day, the highway was closed to the west and to the east, a not unusual occurrence in the winter in the north. I was able to make it as far as Terrace Bay—that's 100 kilometres—but the highway was completely snow-packed. As I was going down a long, twisty, winding hill going into Terrace Bay, I got into a situation they call in the north "360-ing," and I 360-ed faster and faster. I was faster than Kurt Browning going down that stretch of road, across and into the snowbank. I have a four-wheel drive so I was able to extricate myself with no problem and get out. However, a week previously, a woman had 360-ed not far from there on the Steel River bridge into a snowplow and had died.

Transportation is something to take into consideration when we're dealing with the north. There are about 140,000 people outside of Thunder Bay in this area. Last year there were 4,612 accidents and 24 fatalities for that population. I know you have bad weather down here—yesterday it was a little slippery—but until you've seen a storm between Wawa and Sault Ste Marie, until you've seen the whiteouts and the ice—the closure of roads in the north is a weekly occurrence somewhere along the course of those roads.

I want to tell you one more thing that happened. I was coming to the Little Pic River by Neys Provincial Park, which is a stretch of highway that just descends for a mile. The road had been closed. I had to wait about an hour in Terrace Bay to get to Marathon, and as I was going down this one-mile hill—I was halfway down—two transports were coming up. This is a narrow, two-lane highway. On my right is a series of little posts and a drop down to Lake Superior. As I got close to those transports, one transport passed the other and I was shoved off the road, because this is a two-lane road.

Probably the reason this happened—we know about this stuff in the north—is that the head transport was loaded and therefore was slowing down. The transport behind didn't have a load and it couldn't slow down or it wouldn't make the hill, and in no way are those transports going to back down a mile on to the Little Pic River bridge, so it passes. I was seriously worried—if that has ever happened to you—about being sucked into a snowbank and hitting these guard rails. Fortunately, heaven was with me and I survived again.

I mention these driving conditions because it's just one factor that impacts on training in the North Superior training region. I was told of people who routinely drive 100 kilometres each way, from Terrace Bay to Marathon, to go to an evening training program. I met a woman in Manitouwadge who drove from Manitouwadge to Marathon, 100 kilometres each way, Tuesday and Thursday nights for her training program on those sorts of roads.

North Superior is a region where labour adjustment is taking place. The woods industry is downsizing in many places: Abitibi in Thunder Bay has closed a plant; Domtar in Red Rock is downsizing, as are Kimberly-Clark in Terrace

Bay and James River in Marathon. People are worried about that. In Manitouwadge, the Geco mine, which has been open for many years, is also closing.

At the same time, training is very scarce, particularly outside the city of Thunder Bay. Many training programs simply do not get off the ground up there. This is why I believe the local boards will have a positive influence in bringing training to this area.

One of the reasons training doesn't get off the ground up there is eligibility requirements. I just want to give you one example: I'm going to use the federal example deliberately, because it doesn't matter whether we're talking about federal programs or provincial programs.

In Geraldton right now, the hospitality people, the people who own resorts on Lake Nipigon, want trained people in the hospitality industry, as you can imagine. Tourism is something that possibly could help offset some of the adjustment that's happening in the north. Canada Employment is offering a course for hospitality workers which has a lot of women interested. I did talk to two women tourist operators who were also quite hopeful.

However, the course might never get off the ground. They must find 15 people who are on UI—they must be on unemployment insurance—who want to take this course immediately. That eligibility requirement might mean that the course will fold, because to find 15 in a town of 6,000 who are on UI—many women are not on UI. They've either been at home as homemakers, their UI has run out, they are on reserves where they're not eligible for UI, they're farm women, they're failed businesswomen who haven't had UI protection or they're on social assistance. So there are many categories of women who are not able to access this training program.

Similarly, if you already have a job, no matter how pitiful it may be, and you want further training, you're not allowed to quit this job to take training. In other words, you're not allowed to upgrade yourself to the training.

So to everybody's horror, this one training program in Geraldton just might never get off the ground. Now, to be fair, when I left town, the person at Confederation College, the local college, said they had heard they were going to open it and allow social assistance recipients to take this training.

A training program like that would start overnight in Metro Toronto. A training program for hospitality, 15 people: You could get that going in a week. But the criteria just don't translate to the north. We're dealing with criteria that are set elsewhere that just don't work. As the francophone women said, we need criteria that are "adaptés à nos besoins," adapted to our needs. We need flexibility on criteria. Let us have training, but let us have the training that we need. I think that's the kind of thing the local training boards can deal with, because they're on the ground and they can talk to the people directly affected.

1110

Another example is, when I met with the women, they talked about people being laid off in primary resource industries not having enough education to get further training. This is the old northern story. You go to school till you're 16; you quit and you join dad in the mill or you join dad in the mine. I think everybody knows it. Many francophones

and Portuguese immigrants who came in in the 1960s can speak English but they can't read and write it, and therefore they can't go back to school.

The only upgrading that's available in these small towns is night classes, and I've met people who've been taking their high school for eight years at night, credit after credit. In other parts of the world you can become a medical doctor in eight years. In small northern towns, you get your grade 12.

The town of Geraldton, for example, is a case in point. They have a literacy class during the day but no other classes during the day. If those adjustment people want to get their education up, they've got to go back to high school with their kids. It's not that they're too embarrassed to do it; it's that they don't think they're able to. It's been a long time. They don't even think they can do the work or the math in grade 9. So a few people are doing it, but it's not really an option.

What the women said was, "Give us two or three rooms here in Geraldton, have upgrading classes during the day, and we can have a centralized facility instead of training scattered all over." So you see, these local people have identified a problem and, sitting together, I thought they came up with a pretty elegant and simple solution. If the training is in one facility, then you can have a day care onsite, and they identified this as one of the barriers for women for training.

When I say day care onsite, I'm not talking about a \$50,000 facility. You can—and I saw this—have a day care onsite, with the parents onsite, and after renovations to the facility, whatever you have, it can be set up for \$2,000 or \$3,000. So we're not looking at enormous amounts of money. Of course, you have to pay day care providers and you have to have a milk-and-cookies fund, but we're not looking at a fortune. So these are the kinds of things that people in the local training areas can identify.

Confederation College provides evening classes. They all like Contact North; I've given you the brochure. However, no day care is involved in any of these programs. It's my conviction that we cannot expect any change in the present situation in the north if we continue to try to import training ideas and training packages and training plans from the south. I would urge you to amend the bill under the section on criteria for directors, subsection 9(4), to ensure that there is at least one director from the north or, more likely, that the geographical realities of Ontario be recognized.

In that section it says, "In the selection of directors, the importance of reflecting Ontario's"—I would like to put in there, "geographical diversity and linguistic diversity"—"and the diversity of its population and ensuring overall gender balance shall be recognized."

Probably on the main OTAB board or on the councils, there will be people from the north, but I would like to see it, and women up there would like to see it, in the bill.

My other recommendations don't take nearly as long. They also deal with the same section, which states, in the selection of directors, as I've mentioned, "overall gender balance shall be recognized." In my opinion, the word "recognized" is a very wishy-washy word. The section expresses an ideal of wish without telling us how it's

going to wash. It seems to me as if someone who framed the bill looked at the concept of a truly representative board and hesitated and then hedged.

OTAB, as the first section of the bill makes clear, is an attempt to democratize a process, and I think people in the north are quite excited about this new democratization of training.

It mentions in the preamble the "underrepresented or disadvantaged groups," who, we are told, will play "a significant role in the design and delivery of labour force development programs and services." In the north, women might be underrepresented, but they are very key players in their community. In their volunteer work, in their paid work and in their home work, they have a very good handle on what's going on.

In the past, we have to say, in those communities, decisions about local training have been to some extent in the hands of local élites, and very often in the hands of white male business élites. An official women's representative on the local and provincial board—we have one representative, as you know, for women—is certainly a guarantee that this will change somewhat. But there's no guarantee that the women in the other sections—business, labour, education, or women in the other equity groups—will also find their views represented on OTAB.

As the bill stands, the door to full gender representation is partly open. We recommend that if gender representation is desired—and the provincial government has stated that it is desired—subsection 9(4) should make clear that full gender representation on the board should be ensured. So we recommend that the phrase "shall be recognized" be deleted.

Finally, I'd like to turn to one quick point. If the members of the local training boards are to be truly representative and if we are truly to have social action groups on those boards, then that person, that woman, on our local training board has to have a group behind her that will organize women in our training area and get them together to see what women see as crucial and key in our training area. That woman on the training board has to be representative to somebody. She can't just be there because she's a woman. She has to be responsible to somebody and she has to put forth, and we have to be sure that she puts forth in our local area, what women want. She has to have a women's agenda on training that she can work from. She has to have a backup group.

It's impossible, as you can imagine, without money and without resources, for anybody to organize a women's group on training in an area the size of ours. I was able to take my trip because I received money, not from the OTAB project but donated from local women's groups in Thunder Bay. So without organization and without some kind of money to organize ourselves, the fine structure we're setting up here in Bill 96 will become a sham. We'll simply have a woman on the board responsible to no one, representative of no one. Training will remain a preserve of the local élites, as it always has. They have the resources and, to some extent, they have the expertise right now to dominate the process. It's not going to be easy for the representatives from the social action group to play an

equal part without some kind of backup. So I urge you to amend clause 30(1)(i) to specifically authorize the funding of reference groups.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Martin and Mr Wood, please.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): It's certainly good to hear from you. It's really important for this committee to have the first-hand knowledge you bring to this hearing. I can certainly identify with some of the experience of living in the north, because I have for all of my life, and have been involved in some 360s and have hit the banks and been stuck in snowstorms. It can be rather unpleasant.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): Have you got a four-wheel drive?

Mr Martin: No, I don't.

Mr Wiseman: You'd better start looking for one.

Ms Baril: That's right. The truck business is an excellent business.

Mr Martin: It doesn't seem to matter what area you look at, as government. I've found that in the last two and a half years. The issue of distance and weather is something we need to concern ourselves more clearly with in the north than in the south. It does affect the delivery of education programs. I certainly see the recommendations you make here as ones that would speak to a resolution of some of the issues you're talking about.

One of the issues that has been raised by others at this table is the issue of who will deliver these programs. You spoke of one education centre. I know that in some communities in the north it is the boards of education that do it, whether separate or public, and in some communities it's the community college that has come in and set up a structure. What would be your strong feeling around who should lead that and deliver those programs?

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Ms Baril: We have two major players, the federal government and the provincial government. We have to cooperate, and I think we can cooperate on the local level better than we're doing on higher levels. We have to cooperate on the local level.

Who should lead it? I don't know. I know there's competition among various groups. But when you come right down to the local small towns, what has to be done is that those groups have to sit down and figure out what they want to do together. They've got to start a cooperative mode, and I think this is what OTAB is going to do, get that process going.

Mr Wood: Thank you very much for bringing forth an excellent presentation and an explanation as to what can happen to you travelling through the north. I know the areas you're talking about. I've been stranded in White River and Hornepayne and Manitouwadge, where I have a good friend, Gilles Pouliot, the Minister of Transportation.

Ms Baril: I was stranded at Wawa.

Mr Martin: That's my home town.

Ms Baril: And it was very nice.

Mr Wood: I can understand and agree with you in a lot of things you've brought forward, because 80% of the land mass of the province of Ontario is in northern Ontario, yet the population is not there. Small communities of less than 5,000 aren't able to put on courses, so they have 100 or 150 kilometres to travel. So I can understand and agree with a lot of the things you've brought forward, lack of dollars, lack of support systems for day care and for out-of-pocket money for travelling and all that. I don't really have a question. I just wanted to let you know that I'm very supportive of the experiences you've gone through to gather all this information in the winter months and come down here and present this in Toronto to us.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Wood.

Ms Baril: I think we could look at some imaginative solutions up there. Once we get people working on them, I think people can come. This is why I think the local boards are so important in the north.

Mr Wood: Things are different in the north.

Ms Baril: Yes, things are different in the north.

Mr Ramsay: Welcome, Joan. Thank you very much for your presentation. I found it most refreshing, because it was just one person's view of part of northern Ontario. I live in the northeast part of Timiskaming.

Mr Wiseman: That's still the south, isn't it?

Mr Ramsay: You can call me a down-easterner, I guess. I'm down east of you.

I think you gave us first hand, especially in contrast with the group that proceeded you, a very good argument for why the LTABs are so important and why they have to be community-based. I was almost a little frightened by what I heard from the community college group. They really wanted some extremely centralized or top-down approach to this and they wanted to make sure that there were province-wide standards in everything. While I believe there's going to have to be standards, you made some very good arguments about why local groups have to be able to maybe set some of their own standards, especially eligibility—I thought that was very important—in order to upgrade people from where they are to where they need to go, based on your local conditions.

Ms Baril: We've got to be flexible for northern conditions. I met a group of women who have signed up for a computer course. It's going to take them six years to get their diploma, going at night. That's the kind of drive people have, and it's hard to sustain that drive when the economy's being undercut beneath them. So I think people can do it.

Mr Ramsay: Just a short question before I defer to my colleague Mr Offer. You handed out a brochure on distance education, and you spoke of several women having to make these long drives every week. Is there not enough use of the distance ed facilities? I know the infrastructure is in place up there. Could we use that more?

Ms Baril: If you look at the distance ed brochure, you'll see that it's mostly college and university courses. It's a fabulous resource for people who already have their high school training. What it doesn't do is upgrading, and

it doesn't do the kind of occupational courses, such as welding, meat cutting, tourist industry courses, for which you would really need to have a class. I can't see how you'd teach a waitress how to wait by distance education. Training includes all kinds of unacademic things. But people are very thrilled with that, and that's going to make a big difference in the north, Contact North.

Mr Ramsay: Good. Thank you.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I think you've made a very convincing argument of the need for a strong local board to be able to react to and reflect community needs and ways in which adjustment and retraining programs have to be delivered. I think you've made the case. The problem I see is that the legislation doesn't reflect what you think should be there. I agree with you, but the legislation is silent as to the mandatory establishment of local boards and the criteria. I would like to get your thoughts as to whether you feel there should be a change to the legislation so that individuals such as yourself, who have many years of experience and understanding as to the need to reflect the community, should be able to point to a part in the legislation that says, "That is where local boards must be established."

Ms Baril: You've put me on the spot, because I haven't thought of it that way, but I think you're right that the legislation is not specific.

Mrs Marland: I really appreciated your presentation this morning. I can't say that I identify with your driving experiences; I probably wouldn't want to. But it's a very poignant presentation you've made this morning. I'm sure in some areas of the province people who presently hold jobs are not allowed to quit to go and improve, learn and upgrade, but they also have an option every night of the week, even perhaps on some weekends, to do all of those things and work. As you have pointed out so well, with travelling time and distances, and then on top of that for five months of the year add the climate, it certainly is an inequitable situation. I think your request that the eligibility requirements need flexibility is paramount.

Ms Baril: You mentioned that they have an opportunity in the evening, but in fact there isn't much training in the evening. I didn't want to give you that impression.

Mrs Marland: No, I meant down here they can do it any evening and sometimes on a weekend.

Ms Baril: Oh yes, you have all the flexibility in the world.

Mrs Marland: But if you're driving 100-plus kilometres—I mean, you mentioned one woman who does that two evenings a week.

Ms Baril: Many people do it.

Mrs Marland: Add to it the risk and the hazard for them personally, and it just isn't working. It should be. There should be a recognition of that and some proposals made to remedy that situation.

Ms Baril: It's possible, as your colleague mentioned, that you could put more of these courses on distance education—there's a distance education office in every town now—and that would facilitate that. If we loosened their

eligibility requirements and said, "Okay, we could have a class of 12. We can't get 15, but we'll go with 11, we'll go with 12," then it would be simple to do it, to set up a class. Just work things a bit, you know.

Mrs Marland: But to arbitrarily say, "It's got to be 15 or else"—

Ms Baril: That's right.

Mrs Marland: I really appreciated it. Thank you.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you very much. I'm going to ask a practical question, given that I think you're probably representing a lot more people than you think you are, when I take a look at the publication. How do you think the OTAB is going to change what you do?

Ms Baril: I'm a teacher at Confederation College. Did you know that?

Mrs Cunningham: No, I didn't.

Ms Baril: How do I think OTAB is going to change that?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes. Why are you looking forward to establishing this training body?

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Ms Baril: I think the decisions on training have always been very distant from everybody. When you talk to people and say, "We have a community Futures training board," or "We have a Visions training board," or "We have a CITC," people will say, "What's that?" People are simply not involved. They're doing good work; I'm not putting them down. It's just that the average person and people involved in training have no idea that the decisions are being made by these boards; they don't even know these boards exist. When the CITC has a meeting, they don't put it in the paper.

So at this point, this is one board and this will cover everything, and people can say: "Okay, I want X, and I can go to my labour rep or I can go to my women's rep," or "I'm a teacher; I can go to my educational rep." There's a channel for input, and I think that channel hasn't been there before. I have no idea who's on some of these other boards, but I think OTAB will have a much higher profile because it's one board and it's in the community.

Mrs Cunningham: But we'll still have a lot of local boards. In your area, how many local boards are being recommended?

Ms Baril: I don't know. In the training area, I understand there will be the one board representing the local boards. But I'm hoping that many of the other subsidiary training boards will either come under the main board or be subsumed by the main board.

Mrs Cunningham: You should keep an eye on that, because where you notice that there have been good links, keep them.

The Chair: I'm sure she will, Ms Cunningham. Ms Baril, all of us are appreciative of your visit to Toronto today and your participation in this process. We're grateful to you for providing a unique insight into this legislation as it applies to a particular constituency. We thank you for

that, and we trust that you'll keep in touch. Thank you kindly, ma'am. Have a safe trip back home.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Mr Chairman, for the record, I believe Ms Baril had indicated that under section 30 there's no provision for funding for reference groups. Actually, the provision for funding for reference groups is under section 20.

Ms Baril: Is it mandatory or is it just maybe?

Mr Sutherland: It's mentioned specifically right in the legislation.

The Chair: Wait a minute. Ms Baril, sit down a minute here. Do you want to respond to him? The cavalry has arrived.

Ms Baril: I think it's "may be."

Mrs Cunningham: "May be established."

Ms Baril: "May be established." Let's change that to "must be."

Mr Sutherland: I'm just drawing attention to that section, that there is reference to it.

Ms Baril: I think OTAB "must" provide funding.

The Chair: You appreciate Mr Sutherland's intervention, but it doesn't necessarily satisfy you.

Ms Baril: That's right.

ONTARIO NATIVE WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Native Women's Association, if their spokespeople will please come forward and have a seat. We've got a couple of minutes, because your materials are being prepared and distributed. If you want to have a coffee or other beverage, they're over at the side.

Ms Marland, bless you.

Mrs Marland: Between the television and all this equipment, it's not easy to see the presenters. I don't like to look at them through the water glasses.

Mrs Cunningham: Be careful, Mr Chairman.

The Chair: I am careful, Ms Cunningham. People, feel free to sit here with your colleagues. Please, as you start, tell us your names, any positions or titles you have within the association and carry on with what you want to tell us. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for questions and conversation.

Ms Leona Nahwegahbow: Good morning. My name is Leona Nahwegahbow. I'm president of the Ontario Native Women's Association.

Ms Marlene Pierre: Marlene Pierre, executive director for Ontario Native Women's Association.

Ms Holly Hughes: Holly Hughes, assistant director, Ontario Native Women's Association.

Ms Nahwegahbow: I apologize for being a bit late, and I hope you get your copies of our presentation as soon as they're done.

For aboriginal women and the Ontario Native Women's Association, we have the most to gain or lose in the proposed changes to the province's labour market training programs as envisioned by the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board.

This stems from the deplorable state we, as aboriginal women, find ourselves in in the areas of education, training, employment and economic development. Over 50% of all aboriginal families, both off- and on-reserve, are headed by sole-support mothers. Aboriginal people have the highest population growth rate in Canada. Eight out of 10 aboriginal women have been victims of some form of family abuse. Aboriginal women have the lowest income levels in Canada, lower than their aboriginal male counterparts. We have lower education levels than the Canadian average. We have the highest unemployment levels in Canada, and those who are able to work are mostly confined to low-paying, service sector jobs.

It is due to the abovementioned statistics that ONWA is concerned with the proposed direction of the province of Ontario in labour market training. OTAB, or whatever its aboriginal equivalent may be, is a ticket to a better future for aboriginal women. However, it must be based on equity and, more importantly, respect for aboriginal women.

While other groups will talk about pay equity or even employment equity, ONWA has more basic concerns. Before one can have pay equity, one must get a job; before one can get a job, one must have employment equity; and before employment equity, one must have education equity. Education equity and all the supports that come with it, such as child care, income supports, counselling, means of transportation etc, are major keys to aboriginal women's role in self-government.

Our organization has much experience in the area of labour market training, and we have a number of concerns. In 1980, ONWA, along with other provincial aboriginal women's organizations in Canada, initiated the aboriginal women's employment coordinators program with Employment and Immigration Canada. This program assisted aboriginal women's organizations in analysing the labour market situation in their provinces and to initiate processes to better support aboriginal women's involvement in it.

In 1988, ONWA, along with other aboriginal PTOs in Ontario, worked with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities to develop the aboriginal education and employment training strategy. Then in 1990, ONWA was one of the first provincial organizations in Ontario to develop the Pathways to Success strategy. From these experiences, we are learning how to develop labour market training strategies.

One of our major concerns in both these strategies is accountability. In both initiatives, their effectiveness for aboriginal women has been blunted by their lack of accountability back to the aboriginal community, especially back to aboriginal women. Our organization will not be satisfied until such time that women play a more meaningful role in the decision-making processes at the community level and not be paid lip service.

In the Pathways to Success strategy, we are encountering many difficulties; jurisdiction and accountability are two of them. For aboriginal women, on- and off-reserve, anywhere in the province, the voice of aboriginal women is underrepresented or non-existent. The band government infrastructure does not ensure representation of women for off-reserve. ONWA and OMAA, the Ontario Métis and

Aboriginal Association, are the only two recognized organizations in Ontario that speak on behalf of their constituents. We believe it will take some time before an Indian government structure will be in place that addresses the needs of off-reserve people. In the meantime, ONWA must represent the voice of women, and the organization is constantly growing. At this time, we have 65 on- and off-reserve affiliated organizations in Ontario.

Another major difficulty with the Pathways to Success structure—and this is a prevalent experience for ONWA's membership—is that aboriginal women's employment and training needs are supposed to be a priority in the strategy, yet our experiences within Pathways are proving to have the opposite and negative effect.

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We are not about to leave aboriginal women to the mercy of the Pathways structure again or to an OTAB structure which does not guarantee the infrastructural presence of aboriginal women in decision-making at all levels. A major focus of the OTAB activity must be to address the employment and training needs of aboriginal women, with safeguards to ensure this.

Only in the last few days, our organization's women have been experiencing another form of discrimination. Several of the women attending the child care consultations taking place across the province under the Jobs Ontario training fund will not have their child care covered, yet they are being asked to identify how child care spaces are to be used in Ontario.

In addition, OTAB, or its aboriginal equivalent, must be more than just an administration of someone else's system through program transfers to area management boards. We want to see substantive changes to various labour market training programs before they are taken on by the aboriginal community. At present, too much time is spent being accountable to the terms and conditions of treasury board and not to the aboriginal people themselves.

For ONWA, accountability means specific programs designed by, administered by and funded to aboriginal women through their own structures, not government's and not other aboriginal organizations'. To do this, ONWA needs financial resources to adequately address these questions. Consultations, research, program design and evaluation do not come free. Aboriginal women's needs should not have to subsidize other groups in the name of financial restraint. Our membership has always been in a situation of financial restraint.

ONWA and aboriginal women need time, time to develop our own system of employment training, to take into account the needs and aspirations of our people. We should not be rushed to make a hasty decision just to suit someone else's legislative or electoral timetable.

Whatever system is developed must also be comprehensive. Too often, we embark on these initiatives that are only five years in duration, which do not address questions of jurisdiction. Moreover, they fail to develop any kind of holistic structure which takes into account the concerns of aboriginal women, our families, culture and language. More often than not, these are jurisdictional disputes between the

federal, provincial and band governments, which leave aboriginal women falling between the cracks.

In addition, there must be equity for aboriginal women. This means that goals for aboriginal women's training as a priority must be established as a principle of the program strategy, and quotas must be established for representation of aboriginal women's groups on whatever structure develops. Only by having goals and targets for aboriginal women's training will there be any means to judge this strategy's effectiveness. Proper statistics will also have to be developed and administered. Such programs as WITT, women in trades and technology, will need to be expanded and brought about under aboriginal control.

While many of our comments have been directed towards the province and aboriginal leadership in Ontario, work also must be done with non-aboriginal employers: small and large businesses and governments. These are the major employers, and they also have a responsibility in the training field. On a per capita basis, the private sector in Canada spends less on training than any other industrialized nation. As half the aboriginal population resides in urban areas, they, along with employers, must play an active part in developing their own training programs.

With regard to the legislation as it now stands, ONWA does have problems with it. There is no reference to any of the concerns we have mentioned, and this very forum in which we speak will not address them. We need our own forums to develop a system of labour market training initiatives for aboriginal women. The very fact that only one aboriginal representative can be selected to sit on the council of 24 is indicative of how little this legislation will serve aboriginal women. Gender balance, which the legislation has called for in other appointments, is impossible with only one aboriginal person.

In summarizing, therefore, the Ontario Native Women's Association takes the following position:

(1) That a separate aboriginal process be established and funded under OTAB with special emphasis on aboriginal women;

(2) That developmental and ongoing dollars be set aside for ONWA to guarantee aboriginal women's active and meaningful participation in the OTAB aboriginal process;

(3) That an exemption to Bill 96 be arranged for a period of no more than one year to allow aboriginal governments, organizations and institutions to design and develop an aboriginal process that ensures accountability, infrastructural requirements, policy and procedural mechanisms;

(4) That at the community level there will be aboriginal representation on the existing local boards for purposes of networking, monitoring and cooperation.

We have attachments to this presentation which we thought would highlight our presentation.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr McGuinty, please.

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): Thank you for your presentation. We have heard from, I believe, three other representatives of the first nations, none bringing a specific focus to women's issues, though. I think I can safely summarize the others as saying they want out of

OTAB completely, that they have confidence in the federally funded Pathways program and that their desire is to be left alone and they don't think they should be included. They can't possibly see how one representative can reconcile a variety of differences among the males, for instance, let alone having a special interest and concerns for the women.

But you're bringing a slightly different focus. You are saying, "We don't want out completely." Is that correct?

Ms Nahwegahbow: Yes.

Mr McGuinty: You're telling us, if I look at your summary here, that you're looking for an exemption for a year. I'm not really sure what kind of participation you're interested in having when that year has expired, and I wonder if you might elaborate on that a bit for me, please.

Ms Pierre: The very example you used to highlight your concern is probably one of the most difficult problems we are encountering when we're talking about any element of aboriginal self-government. We're expected as aboriginal people to come forward with one position, and that's not always the case, nor should it be expected to be the case, with each and every issue we are confronting.

However, I think what has to be afforded is the opportunity for all of the aboriginal governments, off-reserve institutions and organizations that have already been set up to deal with employment and training to have the opportunity to say, "This is what we want."

ONWA is coming today with our concerns on how we see our interplay with the provincial initiative. We've already had the experience with the federal initiative. We've highlighted those concerns, about how aboriginal women are being treated in that process, and it has not been a very good one. We don't want that to happen in this one.

First off, we do need the opportunity to talk with the other organizations and say, "This is going to be." If there can be a complete agreement, let's go forward with it. But it's my understanding also that those organizations that deal especially with off-reserve people are pretty much in agreement that we have to have a separate process.

We're suggesting that it be a part of Bill 96 but that there be a creation of certain legislative wording that allows us to build. Give us the time and the resources to build what kind of process we want to engage in. We'd rather work with the other organizations, and I think we have to be afforded the opportunity to do that.

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Mr McGuinty: So you're not looking for more representation on the larger board, but rather a board of your own.

Ms Pierre: Yes, one that would be all-inclusive of the aboriginal governments.

Mr McGuinty: All right. Thank you.

Mrs Marland: I was looking for the business card I received yesterday afternoon from Ms Maracle, who was here speaking on behalf of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, so that I could refer to her by her first name.

Ms Hughes: Sylvia.

Ms Pierre: I'm surprised you've forgotten her name so quickly. Most of us don't.

Mrs Marland: I didn't forget her last name, and I won't ever forget her, because her presentation to this committee yesterday afternoon, as I told her personally, was one of the most dynamic presentations I've heard at any committee. I was completely impressed with what she told us.

Having said that, and as my colleague Mr McGuinty has said, she was here asking on behalf of the Indian friendship centres for a total exemption. I'm glad that you're here, by the way, speaking for women. That obviously has to become a priority generally overall, but particularly when we are dealing with native women.

You are saying—I just want to be sure I understand this properly—in the second paragraph on page 5, "The very fact that only one aboriginal representative can be selected to sit on the council of 24"—when you're referring to this council of 24, are you referring to OTAB?

Ms Pierre: Yes.

Mrs Marland: Because I thought it was 22. Am I correct about the legislation?

Mr Gary Wilson: It is 22.

Mrs Marland: It is 22. I do not see under subsection 9(2) where aboriginal women are identified. I certainly see in clause 9(2)(8) that one director would represent women, like people with disabilities, and francophones and so forth. This is one of the things that Sylvia was talking to us about yesterday. To use her words, not mine, she said, "Even if there was one, it would be"—she said, "Where could we find one super-Indian?" My concern is that I don't have the answer as to how this can be addressed. I'm agreeing with you totally that it has to be addressed.

I think the problem, when we look through the makeup of this board, is that we say one of this and one of the other. Who is that person ever going to be who is going to really recognize and represent the needs of everyone within that particular category? I'm wondering, as you're asking only for an exemption for one year, whether you see that down the road boards like OTAB and similar conglomerate boards and agencies that are supposed to represent people will eventually represent everybody, including our native women, without it being pinpointed as a special category. If we are really going to work successfully so that everyone will have mandated equal opportunity, do you think that in the future we wouldn't have to be sitting here trying to talk about individual needs being addressed? Would that be your wish down the road?

Ms Nahwegahbow: I guess that's what our objective is. One of our main goals is to be able to work with the other organizations, alongside of them, and once there is recognition that we are being represented in those organizations, I don't think we'll be demanding as much in the future, as long as the recognition is there and the respect is there.

The Chair: Are you going to be very brief, Ms Marland? You've got 30 seconds.

Mrs Marland: I'll be very brief. The figures you have given us on the opening page of your comments, about the issues and the problems and the real-life experience of aboriginal women, are shocking. There has to be a way to reverse it.

The Chair: Do you want to respond to that?

Ms Pierre: In your reference to Sylvia Maracle's remarks, we're also looking to get to the point where we will say that we want an exemption in total, but I think we have to have that period of time to build up and to be able to say that collectively. If only the friendship centres come here and say that, if only another group comes here and says something else, and we're all coming with different stories for different reasons, for us, anyway, we want to sit down with everybody. We need that time to sit down and talk with everyone and come up with at least some general recommendations that we can all work with together. Our feeling also is that we have to have a separate process. How that comes about is entirely—we could fit into the framework of government or within our own framework of government.

Mrs Marland: I agree.

Mr Martin: It's nice to see you again. The last time we crossed paths was in Sault Ste Marie, my home community; you were having your annual conference. As a matter of fact, not thinking that you were going to be here today, I'm still wearing a little sweetgrass circle you gave me. I treasure it, actually, and I get a lot of nice comments about it, so thank you.

It's good to hear from you again, however confusing sometimes it is. You know that we as a government are committed to recognizing your people as a government and working in that way so that there's a level of respect and understanding developed that will in the end be most helpful to your people as you evolve. Obviously, you're having the same problems within your community as we are having within ours in trying to figure out a way to allow peoples who have traditionally not been included in the decision-making process to be included so that your needs are more adequately addressed.

What concerns me, though, is the in-between time. There are things happening that we have no control over. There's an economy out there that's picking up speed that's global in nature and all of that. We need to be able to compete, and the only way we're going to be able to compete, it seems to me, is if all of our people, all of the people who inhabit Ontario, are able to use the gifts they have in ways that are positive and constructive. I hear you saying, "Give us a year," and I agree that we should be able to establish somehow a board that more adequately reflects clearly your position and the things you want to develop. In that in-between time, do you have any thought on how we might do that?

Yesterday, Sylvia talked very clearly about the need for native people to be able to go away and decide themselves what it is they need to do. I guess I have concern about how long that will take and what will happen. We've all seen the horror stories recently of what's happening to some of your communities in the north because things

aren't happening quickly enough. What do we do? I don't know.

Ms Nahwegahbow: With the organizations involved right now, each comes to the table with its own agenda. They're saying, "This is a priority with us," and the establishment of policies and the jurisdiction question have to be addressed. We say a year. It may not take that long. We're just saying a year because we know for sure that within that period we will be forced to come together and come up with a solution to where we're at right now. We're identifying a year just so that work is being done prior to having that time come up. It may be shorter than a year.

Mr Martin: That's certainly hopeful. I hope you take some comfort too in the notion included in this bill that there will be the possibility of the development of reference groups, which would include more people in the development of some of the ideas that will come forward.

Ms Nahwegahbow: Also, we thought it was a priority for us to be able to consult with our people at a community-based level so that they would have input into what is being developed here.

The Chair: Thank you to the Ontario Native Women's Association and to you, Chief Nahwegahbow, Ms Pierre and Ms Hughes. We very much appreciate your interest, obviously, but as well your travelling here to Queen's Park to share those views with us. You speak for a significant constituency, and you have provided a unique insight into this bill and this legislation. Obviously, you've

piqued the interest of members of the committee, and that's demonstrated by the types of exchanges you were able to have with them. We are thankful to you. We trust you will be following this legislation as it goes through committee for the balance of this week and then, next week, clause-by-clause and then back into the Legislature. We're hoping that if you have any further comments you'll send them to us, either individually or collectively as members of this committee. Thank you and have a safe trip.

Ms Pierre: For the record, it's pronounced Nahwegahbow.

Ms Nahwegahbow: The interpretation is "stand alone."

The Chair: Mine's Kormos, and the interpretation is many things, depending upon whether you work for the Premier's office or not.

Interjection: Kormos must mean "stand alone" too.

The Chair: Well, sometimes you've got to stand alone if you're right. I'll never go as far right as this government has.

Before we recess, there's a query from the research staff, whether an interim—which would be incomplete—summary of recommendations should be made available tomorrow, Thursday, or should it wait until Monday? People can reflect on that over lunchtime. We are recessed until 2 o'clock.

The committee recessed at 1203.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 1403.

ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE-FRANÇAISE
DE L'ONTARIO

The Chair: It is 2:03; we were scheduled to start at 2. A committee member has finally arrived. The first participant this afternoon is l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario. Sir, would you please tell us your name, your title or position and proceed with your comments. Please try to save the second 15 minutes of the half-hour for questions and dialogue.

M. Jean Tanguay : Alors, est-ce que tous les membres sont déjà arrivés ?

The Chair: Well, you're quite right. Perhaps we'd better wait five minutes then.

M. Tanguay : Ça va.

The Chair: Thank you, sir, for pointing that out.

The committee recessed at 1404 and resumed at 1410.

The Chair: It's 2:10 and we now have a quorum. My apologies to you, Mr Tanguay, for the delay in getting started, but you were quite right to point out that it would have been foolish to have started at 2 when we were scheduled to without any members of the committee here.

Please, sir, you will still have 30 minutes, of course. I would ask that you try to save the last 15 minutes for questions and exchanges. Thank you kindly, sir.

M. Tanguay : Merci, Monsieur le Président. Étant un politicien moi-même, je comprends que j'arrive parfois en retard à certaines réunions, même si ce sont des comités de cette importance-ci.

Merci d'avoir donné l'occasion à l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario, car vous savez que je suis le président général pour l'ensemble de la province. Donc, je suis le porte-parole pour la communauté franco-ontarienne. Comme vous le savez, elle se chiffre à environ 500 000 et au-delà.

Il ne s'agit pas de vous le rappeler, mais quand même, l'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario est un organisme voué à la défense des droits de la communauté franco-ontarienne depuis 1910. L'Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario se préoccupe au plus haut point de la question de la formation et de l'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre, en l'occurrence la formation et l'adaptation de la communauté franco-ontarienne.

Je n'ai pas à vous faire apprécier le mémoire qu'on vous présente aujourd'hui. Je n'ai pas l'intention de lire les 30 ou 37 pages, mais j'ai plutôt l'intention de porter votre attention aux points essentiels qu'on retrouve dans le mémoire.

Vous pouvez apprécier que ce mémoire est le fruit de nombreuses années — 1991, 1992 et nous sommes rendus en 1993 — alors presque trois ans de travail, de recherches, de consultations au sein de la communauté franco-ontarienne et de la communauté ontarienne dans son ensemble. Après cette réflexion de deux ans et demi, lors de notre dernière assemblée générale annuelle, c'est pour cette raison que j'ai ajouté, afin que chacun et chacune des

membres du comité ici comprennent bien l'importance de ce document additionnel.

La communauté franco-ontarienne, dans son ensemble, a donné au président général de l'association et son bureau de direction un mandat très spécifique. Si vous permettez, je vous réfère à la dernière page, puisqu'il y a plusieurs «attendu que», ou comme vous diriez en anglais, «whereas», la proposition qui reflète les intentions de la communauté franco-ontarienne et le vouloir de la communauté franco-ontarienne. Ça se lit comme suit :

«Que l'ACFO revendique la création d'un COFAM parallèle, autonome et francophone à tous ses paliers et constituantes et l'établissement d'un véritable partenariat avec OTAB.»

Voilà le mandat que la communauté franco-ontarienne a demandé et a exigé de notre association ; nous devons défendre ce mandat et cette position. Nous vous avons remis dans ce mémoire de quelque 30 pages, où vous retrouvez au début un sommaire, la position de l'ACFO. À notre avis, et je répète, après analyse et travail de deux ans, le projet de loi qui est présentement à l'étude, tel que présenté, n'est pas fidèle à l'Entente Canada-Ontario.

On se souvient bien que le 21 octobre 1991, le gouvernement de l'Ontario et le gouvernement du Canada ont signé une entente de trois ans pour mettre sur pied tout le processus de la formation professionnelle, la création d'OTAB, la création des commissions locales et ainsi de suite.

Si on consulte ce document, l'entente fédérale-provinciale, on constate des responsabilités particulières à l'égard de la communauté franco-ontarienne. Le projet de loi que nous étudions présentement ne les reflète pas du tout. Enfin, dans ce projet de loi, nous voyons la possibilité — pas la possibilité mais la garantie — d'un siège francophone.

Nous voyons aussi dans le mandat de la mission du COFAM, à la disposition 17 de l'article 4, que le COFAM devra «promouvoir la dualité linguistique de l'Ontario dans les programmes et services de mise en valeur de la main-d'oeuvre et prendre en considération les besoins de la communauté francophone de l'Ontario en matière de formation».

Ce sont les deux seuls endroits où, dans le projet de loi, on fait référence à la communauté franco-ontarienne. Dans notre mémoire, nous recommandons des amendements précis au projet de loi visant la création du COFAM afin de remettre à la communauté franco-ontarienne des programmes et des services de qualité en français.

Les amendements proposés s'imposent, à notre avis, pour assurer des services équitables en langue française. Essentiellement, les amendements permettent d'atteindre les objectifs suivants :

Premièrement, une représentation efficace et efficiente de la communauté franco-ontarienne au sein des instances décisionnelles de l'éventuel COFAM. Deuxièmement, les amendements qu'on suggère permettent une gestion de fonds pour les services et programmes de formation en

français par des représentants de la communauté franco-ontarienne. En troisième lieu, nos amendements permettraient la mise en place de fonctionnaires spécifiquement responsables de l'exécution des décisions prises par les représentants francophones.

Nous allons aller un pas plus loin, et nous recommandons un conseil permanent français. Si on comprend bien la structure, il y a en haut de la pyramide le COFAM, qui est appuyé par quatre conseils spécialisés. Nos amendements, que nous considérons essentiels, suggèrent que plutôt que d'avoir un représentant ou une représentante, nous devrions en avoir trois : un siège francophone, un siège au niveau du patronat et un siège au niveau des syndicats, ce qui nous donnerait, au niveau du COFAM, trois représentants ou représentantes. Au niveau de chacun des conseils, les quatre, nous voudrions et nous souhaiterions voir dans le projet de loi apparaître cette même garantie de trois sièges, ce qui voudrait dire qu'au niveau de la structure du COFAM et de ces quatre conseils, nous aurions une représentation franco-ontarienne de quinze sièges.

1420

Dans nos amendements au projet de loi, nous recommandons la création d'un cinquième conseil, pas de personnes supplémentaires, juste une structure supplémentaire, ce qui nous permettrait d'assurer la gestion du dossier de la formation professionnelle par et pour l'Ontario français en partenariat avec l'ensemble de la province par le biais d'OTAB and the four councils. Cette structure nous assurerait une planification globale des services et des programmes en français.

Il y a un autre amendement que nous suggérons, soit dans le budget global, parce que l'entente fédérale-provinciale signée en 1991 identifie, pour les trois ans de l'entente, une somme de 1,6 milliards de dollars par année. Nous considérons qu'une enveloppe devrait être identifiée comme une enveloppe francophone tel que nous le faisons présentement au niveau de l'éducation, aux niveaux élémentaire et secondaire, quoique le dossier de la gestion à ce niveau ne soit pas tout à fait complété, comme nous le savons.

Mesdames, messieurs, les amendements proposés par l'ACFO sont nécessaires et sont possibles sans remettre en question les fondements du projet de loi à l'étude.

Mesdames et messieurs les politiciens — j'en suis un aussi — vous pouvez laisser votre marque pour l'Ontario français. OTAB est une création nouvelle, est un *modus operandi* qui apparaît en Ontario pour la première fois. Nous sommes ensemble, comme citoyens de l'Ontario, en train de le créer, ce partenariat, entre tous les intervenants de notre communauté. Pourquoi ne pas bien faire les choses et mettre une structure sur pied dès le début, avec le projet de loi, qui respectera la dualité linguistique qui est, en fait, une des valeurs fondamentales de la mission d'OTAB ou du COFAM ?

Mesdames, messieurs, j'aimerais quand même vous faire noter qu'alors que M. Bill Davis était premier ministre de l'Ontario, il a laissé sa marque en Ontario français en créant les écoles secondaires de langue française en 1967, 1968 et 1969. C'était quand même un moment im-

portant dans le développement et l'épanouissement de la communauté franco-ontarienne.

Il n'y a pas très longtemps, avec M. David Peterson, la Loi 8 a marqué l'ensemble de l'Ontario. Dans le domaine de l'éducation, alors que Lyn McLeod était ministre des Collèges et Universités, nous avons eu la création du premier collège de langue française à Ottawa, où on avait prévu un maximum de 800 élèves. Il y en a aujourd'hui au-delà de 3000, deux ans après sa création.

Votre comité, en faisant des recommandations et des changements à la loi qui va nous donner l'OTAB/COFAM, pourrait permettre à la communauté franco-ontarienne de prendre sa juste place.

J'arrête là. Si vous avez des questions, je suis ouvert. Je tenterai de répondre dans la mesure de mes connaissances. Je vous remercie infiniment.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): With your proposal that there be a French member of the business community on the board and a French member of the labour community on the board, would that in itself not perhaps negate the reason to have a separate francophone member on the board? Perhaps it might be more appropriate to have a francophone member from the education community on the board representing those aspects of business, but not the separate person just representing francophones.

M. Tanguay : Je comprends très bien. Le membre francophone pourrait venir du domaine de l'éducation. Mais si vous remarquez, dans la composition du comité, le domaine de l'éducation n'a que deux sièges, si je ne m'abuse. Le domaine du patronat et le secteur du syndicat, ces gens ont plus de sièges. Alors, nous avons pensé à ce moment-là, dans le dialogue que nous avons déjà eu, nous dans la communauté franco-ontarienne, et les gens du patronat et les gens des syndicats, nous nous sommes entendus à cette possibilité d'avoir un siège francophone au niveau du syndicat et un siège francophone au niveau du patronat.

Mais vous savez que, si ce n'est pas écrit dans un projet de loi, quand arrive le temps de le mettre en pratique, ce n'est pas toujours assuré. Nous considérons, et je réitère, qu'un seul membre au sein d'OTAB et du COFAM, pour parler, pour défendre les intérêts de la communauté franco-ontarienne, pour s'assurer que toutes les recommandations et toutes les indications qui existent ici par rapport aux responsabilités et de la province et du gouvernement fédéral, ce serait quasi impossible de réaliser le projet pour ce qui est de la communauté franco-ontarienne. Alors, nous n'avons pas d'objection à ce qu'il y ait un siège francophone chez les éducateurs. Mais jusqu'à ce moment-ci, les éducateurs ne nous ont pas donné d'indice qu'ils seraient prêts à garantir un siège à la communauté franco-ontarienne, quoiqu'il y ait eu des discussions.

1430

Mr Turnbull: One of the things that has come out of this discussion so far is that there have been many interest groups that have come forward and have suggested that they want a seat. Quite frankly, if there was a seat granted to all of the people who have asked for one, we would have a board which would take up all of the unemployed

people of the province. We'd solve all of the unemployment problems in one fell swoop. But quite obviously we have to have a manageable board.

One of the concerns that has been strongly represented is the fact that we need more representation from the education community, and while it's very important to have the user groups, being labour and management, well represented, perhaps we need more from the education community. That's why I'm suggesting to you that perhaps rather than having a special francophone seat per se, we designate within all of these three groups a francophone member who would have to be there.

M. Tanguay : En autant que c'est dans le projet de loi. Ce n'est pas écrit dans le projet de loi. Ce que nous vous recommandons, c'est que votre comité recommande un changement, un amendement à la loi afin qu'un représentant francophone siège en éducation. À ce moment-ci, nous avons recommandé strictement en fonction des sièges du syndical et des sièges du patronat.

Mais d'autre part, ceci étant dit, il faut assurer un forum où ces membres francophones intéressés puissent se réunir et former une entité francophone qui serait responsable de planifier, d'organiser pour la communauté dans son ensemble, en partenariat avec l'OTAB et ses structures, la formation professionnelle dans la province.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

M. Tanguay : Je pourrais peut-être dire, juste pour compléter, que nous agissons ainsi présentement dans le domaine de l'éducation, que ce soit au niveau des conseillers scolaires — vous avez l'AFCO, qui représente la communauté franco-ontarienne au sein des différents conseils scolaires; vous avez l'OSSTA, Ontario Separate School Trustees' Association. Mais en éducation, nous avons notre gestion au niveau de surintendant, au niveau de gouvernement, au niveau du ministère de l'Éducation. Pourquoi pas, avec cette nouvelle structure, réagir immédiatement en écrivant le projet de loi?

The Chair: Mr Wood, please.

Mr Wood: It's nice to see you again, Mr Tanguay. You've come forth with an excellent presentation. As you're aware, the riding that I represent probably has the highest percentage of francophone population of all of the 130 ridings in Ontario. Hearst, I believe, is 95% French, and most of the other communities are above 50%. Kapuskasing is probably close to 70% French population now.

I just want to continue on a little bit on what the questioning was there. You seem to be indicating that the francophone population would like to have some type of say in the management of OTAB to make sure that there is instruction in their first language, which is French.

I'm just curious as to whether, when we're drawing people at the local board level, the reference groups, the emphasis can be put on that we must draw from what the population is there: If it's a high percentage of francophone population, then labour should draw people from labour whose first language is French, and for business, the first language should be French, and the same with the reference groups. I'm just wondering, for the management

of the training, how that would fit in, if that would be good enough, or if you still believe you need it at the OTAB level, at the 22-board member level.

M. Tanguay : Une bonne question. Premièrement, vous avez une région très française que j'ai souvent visitée. La structure veut tout simplement permettre à la communauté franco-ontarienne de planifier et d'être en mesure de garantir une formation professionnelle à ses différentes composantes mais, Monsieur Wood, et je le répète, toujours en partenariat avec la communauté anglophone de la région. J'enrichie en disant qu'à ce moment-ci, nous parlons d'OTAB ou du COFAM. Mais ceci réapparaîtrait aussi au niveau des commissions locales. Maintenant, dans notre mémoire, ici nous vous suggérons une structure pour les commissions locales. Nous l'avons déjà présenté le 6 mai 1992, lors de la consultation provinciale.

J'aimerais peut-être tenter de vous faire comprendre davantage pourquoi nous voulons des garanties dans la loi. Présentement en Ontario, parce que l'OTAB n'est pas une créature encore réelle, il existe des CITC. Il y en a 57 dans la province présentement. Peut-être que je me trompe d'un ou de deux chiffres mais je ne pense pas.

L'autre jour, il y a quelques mois de ça, j'ai eu un communiqué avec une personne d'un CITC — je vais l'appeler un CITC parce que je ne connais pas la formulation française — dans une région bilingue à forte pourcentage : la capitale nationale. J'ai demandé s'il y avait un représentant francophone siégeant au CITC de la capitale nationale. Ce n'est pas à Kapuskasing ça; c'est à Ottawa. On m'a dit que non.

J'ai commencé à faire une vérification à travers la province. Je n'ai pas vérifié les 57, mais j'ai remarqué qu'il y avait une bonne représentation de francophones qui pouvaient participer activement à l'élaboration des besoins de la formation professionnelle de la population, peut-être à Hearst, puis il a un ou deux membres dans la région de Sudbury, but elsewhere, very few.

1440

Alors, je nous dis, parce que nous sommes tous et toutes des Ontariens et des Ontariennes, l'expérience du passé puis l'histoire de l'ACFO depuis 1910, que ce soit des garderies, que ce soit l'alphabétisation, que ce soit l'éducation élémentaire ou secondaire, que ce soit mon permis de conduire, que ce soit dans le domaine de l'agriculture. Des milliers de Franco-Ontariens et Franco-Ontariennes — je ne veux pas vous amener tous les cas; tout ce que je vous dis, c'est que lorsque nous avons un projet de loi, on ne demande pas l'impossible. On demande qu'on respecte le concept de la dualité linguistique en nous donnant des structures qui ne coûtent pas plus cher.

Je parlais à un ministre ontarien il y a à peine quelques jours, et puis je lui disais que les dossiers étaient lents. Il a dit : «On a fait ceci, on a fait cela». Oui, mais avec une participation et une garantie financière du fédéral. C'est rattaché un peu à l'OTAB/COFAM. Le dossier collégial ne bouge pas. Pourtant, les collèges d'éducation post-secondaire sont une responsabilité exclusivement provinciale. Encore une fois je vous invite, pour ce qui est de préparer ce projet de loi avant la troisième lecture, d'y insérer

quelques amendements qui permettraient à la communauté franco-ontarienne d'avoir des outils, un marteau et puis une scie, and a level, afin qu'elle puisse planifier, qu'elle puisse s'épanouir, développer, participer économiquement au développement de l'Ontario. Si l'on n'a pas reçu une formation ou si l'on n'a pas accès à cette formation et on ne sait pas lire et écrire, comment voulez-vous qu'on le fasse? Je vous remercie.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Offer. Quickly, please.

Mr Offer: Thank you very much and thank you for your presentation. I'd like you to help me out on this and I know that you've spoken about this. One of the purposes of the legislation indicates that there will be labour force development programs and services which promote Ontario's linguistic duality. One of the objects of the legislation says that one will take into account the training needs of Ontario's francophone community. There is not now in the legislation the mandatory creation of local training boards. We speak about it, but it's not in the legislation.

If that were in the legislation and if there was an understanding that those local boards would reflect the community that they are responsible for, would you not be given within yourself an assurance that the needs of the francophone community, by virtue of the purpose which I alluded to, an object which I referred to, and the mandatory creation of these boards, would be met, the concerns that you have so properly brought forward to this committee?

M. Tanguay : L'esprit de ce que vous dites, je le reçois bien. Je voudrais qu'on puisse faire ça, qu'on aurait pu faire ça dans le passé. Mais l'expérience depuis que je m'occupe de la politique — c'est depuis l'âge de quinze ans à différents niveaux — m'a toujours démontré que pour ce qui est de l'Ontario français, si ce n'est pas écrit et si ce n'est pas dans un projet de loi : «We're thinking about it. It looks good but we'll talk.»

Permettez-moi de vous en donner un exemple de la fameuse Entente. Je ne vous la lirai pas toute ; juste une ligne. Il y a un chapitre sur les francophones :

Article 5.14 : «L'Ontario s'efforcera le plus possible d'assurer que des services soient disponibles en français pour satisfaire aux besoins de formation des francophones.» C'est la phrase suivante que je veux que vous reteniez : «Cette disposition peut comprendre l'établissement d'institutions postsecondaires francophones.»

J'ai approché le gouvernement d'aujourd'hui avec cette phrase-là ; en d'autres mots, qu'on pourrait utiliser une partie des fonds de cette entente-là pour assurer la création du collège dans le nord. Remarquez bien que c'est un élément essentiel à assurer les services de la formation professionnelle. Quel meilleur outil qu'un collège ? Le gouvernement d'aujourd'hui, après avoir analysé ça, m'a dit : «Ça ne touche pas au collège dans le nord ni au collège dans le sud.»

Alors, partout où c'est en rose ou en jaune, on parle des francophones et des garanties. Mais ce n'est pas une loi ; c'est une entente, and we make the interpretation of the entente that we want to make. Mais quand il y a une loi, il y a même une différence entre «should» et «shall». Juste

dans les lois sur l'éducation, la communauté franco-ontarienne a dû aller en cour pour une différence entre «should» et «shall».

Je réitère mon invitation, mes amis ontariens et mes amies ontariennes : Nous vous demandons d'assurer à la communauté franco-ontarienne d'être partenaire à part entière sans rien enlever à personne. Donnez-nous l'occasion de gérer, en partenariat avec le reste de l'Ontario, notre formation professionnelle afin que nos Franco-Ontariens développent des compétences afin qu'on puisse affronter le monde, pas simplement ici en Ontario. Nous savons que nous avons une économie qui devient de plus en plus globale et nous voulons être partenaires à part entière.

The Chair: Monsieur Tanguay, the committee, I tell you, thanks you and the Association canadienne-française de l'Ontario for your presentation today. You have obviously captured the attention of every member of this committee. I am sure they will reflect on your comments both as they apply to OTAB and this bill and as they apply to some of the other long-standing matters that you touched on. We are grateful to you. We trust that you will keep in touch and continue to communicate with individual members and with the committee.

M. Tanguay : Si vous me permettez un dernier commentaire, Monsieur le Président, il paraît que c'est entre la deuxième lecture et la troisième lecture que la sagesse des législateurs, des hommes politiques et des femmes politiques se réalise. Alors, je vous souhaite bonne chance et j'espère pouvoir, comme la communauté franco-ontarienne, lire en troisième lecture un projet de loi qui sera à la hauteur pas tout simplement de l'Ontario français, mais de l'Ontario dans son ensemble. Merci.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

1450

ONTARIO NURSES' ASSOCIATION

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Nurses' Association. Would their spokesperson please come forward, have a seat, tell us your names, your professional titles, if you have any, and proceed with what you have to tell us. We've got 30 minutes. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for questions and dialogue. As you've been able to see or witness, that's a very important part of the process.

Ms Jane Cornelius: My name is Jane Cornelius and I'm the vice-president. With me are Seppo Nousiainen, research officer; Lesley Bell, the associate director of government relations, and Carol Helmstadter, who is the government relations officer.

As vice-president of the Ontario Nurses' Association, I'm here to represent the views of over 50,000 registered and graduate nurses in the province. The Ontario Nurses' Association brings a unique perspective to these committee hearings. We are the voice of staff nurses who work in hospitals, community health, industry, nursing homes and homes for the aged.

The association is in agreement that Ontario needs to create a centralized training and adjustment board with a broad mandate to promote, fund, coordinate and design

programs related to labour force training and adjustment. Clearly, new initiatives are needed in this area and it is a welcome move to see the consolidation of existing programs under one centralized authority.

The association is in complete agreement that labour, business, educators, trainers and representatives of under-represented or disadvantaged groups need to have a legitimate voice in the design and delivery of training and adjustment programs. There is no question that the labour force partners are in the best position to make decisions about these issues.

We agree with the ground rules and the organizational details set out in the bill. However, the association does have a number of comments to make on the areas of this proposed legislation that may be obstacles to the success of OTAB.

The objects and purposes in the bill speak in a sufficiently broad way to enable the board to undertake virtually any mandate. However, it seems odd that there is no reference to the concepts of active labour market policies which would seek to address the anticipated needs and facilitate the required changes. These concepts are well known to the government and have already been presented in the discussion paper, *Skills to Meet the Challenge: A Training Partnership for Ontario*.

Unfortunately, very little of these concepts can be found in the bill. In fact, what is said seems more appropriate for the more or less reactive policies which have characterized Ontario initiatives in training and adjustment in the past.

The association believes what is needed now is more innovation, a notice to OTAB that it is no longer business as usual. Indeed, what is needed is intervention and operation in the labour markets.

We are also disappointed that there is no explicit mention made of OTAB's involvement in the retention and creation of jobs in the province. The association believes employment retention and creation should be explicitly flagged as one of the roles of OTAB.

Another area the association believes needs clarification is the definition of "public sector." It is not clear whether in the proposed legislation "public sector" includes such organizations as nursing homes, charitable homes for the aged and the Victorian Order of Nurses. These organizations receive a substantial amount of public funding. However, it remains unclear as to whether these organizations would be construed to be public sector organizations. Would the definition also include agencies, boards and commissions?

The next point we would like to address is the appointment of directors who will represent labour. The association is concerned that independent unions that are not affiliated with a central body will not be considered in the nominations process. This would be regrettable and we urge the committee to find some solution to this problem. At the same time, it might be useful to specifically mention that the labour directors should be comprised of both private and public sector representatives, since the bill is clear that both sectors will be under OTAB.

With the incorporation of the suggestions that this association has made, we look forward to OTAB acting in a decisive manner. As the committee knows, the success of OTAB will be critically dependent upon the actions or non-actions of other government departments. For example, a strong argument can be made that advanced notice and severance pay provisions under the Employment Standards Act are not adequate in providing sufficient lead time to engage in comprehensive planning or in providing a sufficient measure of income security. Unless the government changes these provisions, then OTAB's capacity to facilitate change will certainly be limited.

Layoffs in the hospital sector are occurring at an alarming rate. As a representative for staff nurses in this province, we are experiencing the repercussions of the current situation. Tragically, there is no corresponding number of jobs being created in the community health sector as the government cuts back jobs in hospitals. So far, the government has refused to do this, so the current employment crisis in the health care sector will only get worse in the next fiscal year.

Also based on our front-line experience in the hospital sector, there are, we believe, valuable lessons to be learned from the operations of the Hospital Training and Adjustment Panel. This adjustment panel has been in existence since April 1992, yet it is still having difficulties with uncooperative employers. For example, as of January 25, 1993, in the greater Metropolitan Toronto area, 38 hospitals had formed their joint committees, yet 17 others had not.

This lack of compliance by a sector whose funding is tied directly to government policy raises the question of how OTAB will deal with the issue in the broader arena. To make this act work, the association believes strongly that there must be a clear commitment to training and adjustment by both employers and employees in the private and public sector. The lack of coordination and communication among employers, as it relates to labour adjustment, is problematic in that it does not facilitate the ease of labour market adjustment.

There are also problems presently encountered with the federal unemployment insurance program. Unlike the Steelworkers' plan, no allowances have been made for HTAP, under the Unemployment Insurance Act, to extend unemployment insurance benefits to laid-off workers until they have completed a retraining program. There must be recognition of the educational requirements to meet this end. The current provisions do not recognize the barriers imposed in facilitating further education.

Our point in raising these concerns is to illustrate some of the obstacles that must be overcome to ensure OTAB's success. While some of these concerns may be beyond your jurisdiction, they cannot be ignored.

In conclusion, I would like to repeat that the Ontario Nurses' Association believes that Bill 96 has considerable merit. New initiatives in this area are clearly needed and it is encouraging to see the government taking this action.

Mr Sutherland: Thank you very much for coming forward and making a presentation today. Certainly, we know the fine work that your members do across this province in

the hopefully increasing role they're taking in decision-making in many of our health care facilities.

I want to just ask you specifically about your comment that you thought there should be direct reference to job creation and job retention. The legislation makes reference to helping to provide people with the skills, improving their lives, developing a competitive economy, but also trying to achieve some of the other objectives. I think we all feel that will be the outcome in terms of having a more skilled workforce, that it's going to help retain workers. I'm just wondering if you could elaborate a little more as to why you feel it should be specifically mentioned in the legislation.

1500

Mr Seppo Nousiainen: It seems strange that job creation and retention, dealing with employment problems, aren't specifically mentioned in the bill. It actually looks like some sort of compromise solution. Perhaps the words "job retention" were too strong. We can't quite figure out why you can't be explicit about that in the bill, because I think that's what the point is. It's okay to say that there will be an indirect effect, lots of other things, but why not say that directly? I think that's the comment that we're trying to make.

Ms Carol Helmstadter: If I could just add, we have a situation, for example, where hospital nurses are being laid off in unprecedented numbers. The former Minister of Health has asked that they be given first crack at all the new jobs in the community, but in fact, the community health nurses are also being laid off. What is the point in having HTAP-trained hospital nurses to do community work if the jobs aren't there? I think this is the sort of practical consideration that we wanted to raise.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much for your presentation, Ms Cornelius. Of course I'm pleased to hear about your support for the general thrust of OTAB and especially bringing all the groups together, because I think the confusion that your colleague just referred to can be avoided that much earlier if these issues are raised before we're actually in that situation, so that we do have the best distribution of staffing that will work for everybody.

I'd like to know, first of all, what proportion of your membership does work in the private sector.

Ms Lesley Bell: A very small proportion. The only ones we have are a few in industry, and they're rapidly closing, and—

Ms Helmstadter: Homes.

Ms Bell: Homes, nursing homes. The vast majority of our nurses, 80% of our nurses, work in hospitals.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay, thanks. The next thing is that pulling together the groups that we have will take advantage of the HTAP, for instance. The experience that they've had in training and the kinds of responses they've had can be shared with other groups as well as, I guess, highlighting what your success is with the programs you have and where the trainees are going.

I did want to say, too, that this is a progressive—evolutionary, I suppose, is a better word—kind of model that

allows the experience to be built up. For instance, the main emphasis at the beginning will be on the private sector, but the public sector is definitely mentioned. As you know, the public sector now qualifies for programs that are carried out through the government, through the Ministry of Skills Development, that will be brought in under OTAB. So immediately there will be some association for the public sector in programs that are administered by OTAB. But this is something that will, as I say, develop, that there will be programs for all workers regardless of what the sector is, because obviously we need well-trained workers in both sectors. I think the experience that you have in a setting like a hospital can carry over into other health care sectors as well as the community at large.

I was wondering, then, what your feeling is about the local boards and your participation on the local boards, and whether you see that as a useful avenue for the kinds of experience that you have in your workplace.

Ms Bell: I think the local boards are very important if you consider that in a lot of the smaller communities the hospital is the major employer in those areas. So taking a local board and bringing in the uniqueness of the locality and bringing people together to determine what's there is wonderful.

I'm a little concerned that there may be some problems with communication and how everybody decides on the funding envelope and those kinds of things, but I think that bringing in the community at the local level is imperative to make this procedure work.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I want to say at the outset that I found your presentation, in a positive sense, disturbing, and I want to tell you why. I think you've dealt with an issue on which we might not have heard very much before, and it talks about the actual idea behind OTAB. I'm talking mainly about the second page of your presentation. It is, in that job creation which you have so well brought forward, the speaking to the issue of predictive approach to change and consequences.

I think that what you've done is you've brought forward a very important aspect about this whole question of training. When I hear your presentation, I hear really a concern about OTAB, and is it really going to be dealing with in a real way the demands of tomorrow? Are we going to be equipping people with the opportunity to create new jobs, or are we going to be more in a reactive type of mode? I would like to hear from you whether OTAB should be more predictive, that this is an opportunity for this type of organization to be more predictive, to be more proactive in job creation as well as retention. I do not believe that this legislation deals with the matters that you've brought forward.

Mr Nousiainen: I don't think we do either. Most of these concepts are quite well known. If you read the literature on adjustment and training, these concepts are quite well known, and we found it a little bit strange that none of these words actually found their way into the legislation.

So we have the impression that what you're going to do is you're going to cobble together all these programs that currently exist, which essentially are reactive programs,

and then it's business as usual, except that you've got this new superstructure. What will change? When you're talking about objectives, purposes—and some of these objectives and purposes are quite ambitious, quite abstract too—I thought you'd find a little bit of room for simple words like "active," "employment creation." We all understand these words, and we wondered why this didn't happen. Really, that was the point of bringing forward these comments.

Mr Offer: It is strange—and I went through the purposes and objects as you were going through your brief—that the words "job creation"—

Mr Nousiainen: Sine qua non, the whole thing.

Mr Offer: —which are so important to so many people in this province now, haven't found their way into so many different clauses in the purposes and objects of this legislation. If OTAB is just a consolidation of existing programs, well then, okay. Fine. But I think that if we really want to deal with the realities of tomorrow, it's got to take on more of the challenge that you've issued today. It's got to deal with the predictive approach. It's got to deal more with job creating, and it can, if it wants to. I'm not certain that the legislation will do it.

Mr Nousiainen: What is the point of a training and adjustment program in the first place? What's it for? It is for job creation. It is for job retention. That's what it's for; nothing else.

Mr Offer: Yes.

Mr Nousiainen: It's not to sort of train people for the sake of training, have them adjust here and there for the sake of adjusting. It's about jobs. That's all we're really saying.

Ms Bell: I think we have to realize that the marketplace is quite a different venue than we used to see, and we absolutely agree that this needs to be more forceful. The idea of only bringing these groups together, while it's wonderful in accessing it, doesn't go far enough in approaching it from a more progressive, "Let's go out there and figure out what it is we need and train these people to do that." The government suggested that's inherent in the bill. I hope they're right.

I would suggest, though, that they could be a little more explicit and a little more forceful in it, that in fact you're going to have a number of people at this table who have never been all together before, all with vested interests, who are going to have to start playing with the same ball and in the same game. I suggest that unless it's pretty explicit, it may just be the same kind of, "Well, look how wonderful what we've already done is."

Mrs Cunningham: It's good to see some of you again. I refer to you as the front-line workers, so I was interested to hear your comments today.

I'd like to ask you a couple of questions, because we've had some input here with regard to the makeup of the board of directors, if you want to look at it that way. I'm looking at section 9 right now. There has been, of course, some concern with regard to labour representing unionized workers only, but you've added something to

that, and you talk about having concerns that unions which are not affiliated with the central labour body will not be considered in the nominations process. Have you had any input so far to this whole nominations process from labour? Has anybody asked for your opinion, or have you had any discussion about whether you should be represented there or not?

Ms Bell: Not to my knowledge. This is our first approach on speaking to this issue.

1510

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you for being here. That's interesting because, of course, they have purported to speak for both unionized and non-organized workforces and we thought their discussions were rather comprehensive and complete, but we're finding that's not so. By the way, I appreciate your thoughts on the retention and creation and we'll take a look at that as part of the purposes.

The other issue I'd like to speak to you about is, what do you think this board will do in the area of health care? You know that it's divergent, that it's changing, with the emphasis on community-based health care. Yesterday I was talking in London about the cutback for ambulance workers and the fact that we've got services that aren't being provided. So there are some service areas in health care that are going to have to be increased. What do you think this board is going to do in that area, because it's one of the more important areas that we live in. It affects our day-to-day lives. How can it be different? Is it going to be better?

Ms Bell: I think one of the problems we're going to face is that by the time OTAB is up and running, the likelihood is that there are already going to have been a lot of adjustments, which is what HTAP, as far as the institutional sector, is supposed to deal with.

But as we've already mentioned, you can't educate someone to a job that doesn't exist. We've had some problems currently in the health care sector where we have areas where there is a need identified and yet we're having some difficulty accessing the programs that would in fact give our laid-off nurses that opportunity to take over there.

One example that we can speak to exactly is in the Sudbury area, where they're looking at radiation therapists in the cancer clinics, and that's what we would have liked that OTAB would do, is kind of get the networking so you can access the programs, get the people there and kind of get along with things. But it's difficult to determine what will be needed when we still don't know what the health care reform is going to bring forward. There's a lot of rhetoric about the move to the community, not a lot of action as yet, and we're a little concerned that it's pretty piecemeal and we see an incredible downsizing in the hospital sector and going nowhere. That's certainly not the first time we've said that and it'll not likely be the last.

Mrs Cunningham: Another issue is the one of sending patients for specific services outside of the country. Yesterday, again, I was at a hospital in London talking to radiologists about—I might not get the right terminology, so help me out—certainly the CAT scanners and the other one was the imaging.

Ms Bell: MRI.

Mrs Cunningham: MRI, and there's just been a document sent out from OHIP advising hospitals that they should be sending patients to Buffalo, to Detroit and somewhere in Minnesota. Of course they were shocked, because we have units that aren't being used and they talked about for two reasons: one was money, but the other was training. I'm wondering how this OTAB in fact could have some influence there. What would be your recommendation, because obviously we want to do this within the closest geographical area for patients, which would be my first priority, and secondly, I want people in Ontario working.

Ms Bell: I think if you look at the concept of the OTAB and then local boards, at least with good communication you'd have the indication that we've identified a deficit here and yet we've got people here who could be utilized there. On paper, it should work if everything's tied together. I guess we'll have to wait and see.

Ms Helmstadter: But I think it's a point well taken. For example, Princess Margaret here in Toronto has been importing radiation technicians for some time and yet now we have health care workers being laid off who could be trained to do that if OTAB is working properly.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm glad you raised that today because actually that was a very large issue when the present government was in opposition and I thought something had been done about that. So I'm glad you raised it because we can now move forward and ask those kinds of questions because that, to me, was a flagrant example of where we needed the training, where people were willing to be trained and actually wanted to do the work. So thank you for raising it.

The Chair: Thank you to the Ontario Nurses' Association, Ms Cornelius, Ms Bell, Ms Helmstadter and Mr Nousiainen. We appreciate your participation. You've again shed light on this legislation as it impacts on a very specific constituency. You've made a valuable contribution to the process. We're grateful to you. Please keep in touch. Thank you, people.

ONTARIO COMMITTEE ON TRADES, TECHNOLOGY AND OPERATIONS OCCUPATIONS FOR WOMEN

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Committee on Trades, Technology and Operations Occupations for Women. Please come forward, have a seat, tell us your names and your positions, if you have any with the committee. We've got 30 minutes. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for discussion and exchanges.

Ms Lynn Cullaton: Thank you. Good afternoon. My name is Lynn Cullaton. I'm representing this committee with the large moniker. I work full-time as a coordinator of the women's access to apprenticeship project, sponsored by the Ministry of Skills Development and delivered through Centennial College. I have a colleague with me today.

Ms Elizabeth Bohnen: I am Elizabeth Bohnen and I am a community adult educator and a member of the committee.

Ms Cullaton: I would like to start off our remarks today on a personal note. Elizabeth and I have just come from the funeral of one of our committee members who passed away suddenly. Gayle Quirie was a civil servant for many years and was very dedicated and worked diligently on the women's access to apprenticeship project to help women in Ontario enter trades and technology occupations. We'd like to state today that the issues presented in our brief are in the spirit of Gayle's hard work and the committee's efforts on behalf of women in Ontario.

We'd like to also thank you for the opportunity to participate today. The Ontario Committee on Trades, Technology and Operations Occupations for Women is a province-wide committee. It's been in existence for the past 12 years and we have representatives from community groups, community colleges, the public and private sector. The committee is also a subcommittee of the senior adult training officers with the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario.

I want to pass you by our mission statement and objectives in the brief we have submitted and take you to a précis of the committee's work. We've been promoting access to women for what unfortunately are still known as non-traditional jobs in order to widen women's employment opportunities. It's essential that women have access to jobs which give them higher pay, increased job satisfaction and job security. Women obviously need suitable training opportunities in order to gain access to those jobs.

What we know historically and currently is that women tend to receive very occupationally segregated training and education. They're often confronted with further barriers if they're from a group such as immigrant women, racial minority, aboriginal, francophone or rural women, women with disabilities, single parent, re-entry and low-income women.

You've heard throughout these hearings from other women's groups about other systemic barriers that are presented to women with regard to training and workplace access and lack of income support for training. There's lack of child care, lack of transportation, the issues of sexual harassment and no recognition currently for off-shore accreditation and experience. Those are just a few of the many barriers we're looking for.

In terms of the long-term effects to women of these systemic barriers, these are well-documented statistically and in the context of our comments with respect to the brief, I just wanted to remind us of a few of those. You know very clearly about the wage gap that women are currently still experiencing, \$25,000 in 1990 per year versus \$37,000 roughly for men.

With respect to the occupational segregation, we know very clearly that 84% of working women are employed in service industries. With respect to the apprenticeship system in Ontario, we're looking at only 5% of women availing themselves of apprenticeship opportunities and only 2% of those are in the non-traditional fields such as motive power, construction and industrial trades. There has been this initiative through the Ministry of Skills Development in Ontario for the past three years, which has been successful in increasing women's participation in

non-traditional apprenticeships by 65%. The fact is that the real numbers of participants against men in those occupations are still very low.

With respect to the educational polarization, women are still representing only 29% of the students in math and physics and 12% of those in engineering. Again, with respect to full-time work, women are not as participative as they need to be: 70% of all part-time workers are women and 25% of all women work part-time.

1520

This polarization and disparity continues to exist despite the fact that women now account for at least 45% of the paid labour force; we spend between 34 and 37 years in paid labour, which is roughly equivalent to men; and most important, by the year 2001, almost 66% of new entrants to the labour market will be women.

In summary, even though women's participation in the labour force continues to grow, women are seriously under-represented in well-paying occupations. We have low wages and not particularly good access to full-time employment. This is the context of the women's experience from which we reviewed the bill.

With the establishment of OTAB, we feel that this government has an unprecedented opportunity to create an inclusive and integrated training system which addresses these inequities and aims for and achieves economic wellbeing, both for the province on the whole and for all its constituents. This bill potentially enables women and other underrepresented groups and disadvantaged groups to play a significant role in the design and delivery of labour force development programs, as stated in "Purposes," clause 1(a).

It is clear that much work has been done in developing the framework for the board and in preparing this draft legislation. We know that the minister, government, training stakeholders and steering committees have given much thought and engaged in much negotiation to bring the process to this stage.

Our committee also had long and in-depth involvement in training issues. Because of our experience in working towards training equity for women, we also know the importance of articulating clearly and strongly equity objectives, if those objectives are to be met. What's not written in legislation is not required by it.

Therefore, we're saying that for women and underrepresented groups to be effective in their roles and for these inequities to be systematically eliminated, the issues of equity access and measurable goals must be formally incorporated into the legislation and pursuant regulations. The government must be proactive in setting standards for equity, accessibility, quality and accountability throughout the training system.

We'd also like to state here that in order for OTAB to ensure that programs and services are consistent with government economic and social policies, we need to have clear links between pending employment equity reform, pay equity, the Human Rights Code and other policies and legislation under development.

For these reasons, we have come to you today to recommend the following amendments to the act, and we've done them clause by clause for your ease.

Under "Objects," paragraph 4(1)5, which I won't repeat because it's a large clause, we're looking for stronger language, changing "To seek to ensure" to "To ensure."

We understand that legislative language can be limited. However, what we are expecting is more positive and action-oriented language with respect to equity in the training system.

With regard to paragraph 4(1)9, the same sort of logic appears for us. We would like to see "To seek to ensure" replaced by "To develop and implement a training equity policy to ensure access and equity."

The governing body and local boards need to be specifically mandated to ensure that equity needs are adequately addressed. The training system will have to be accountable for measurable equity initiatives, even to the extent of goals and timetables. We're looking also for a mechanism of regular evaluation.

With respect to paragraph 4(1)10, again it says, "To identify and seek to eliminate." We would like to see more proactive language here, where it would be amended to say, "To develop and implement specific measures which eliminate systemic and other discriminatory barriers."

We're far beyond the stage of identification of barriers. In fact, over the last decade there are many resources, from the Ontario women's directorate, from the national association of Women In Trades, from community groups, colleges and private consultants, with respect to the barriers that women face to training and employment, especially within the non-traditional or trades and technical occupations sector. Proactive measures need to be jointly defined by labour market partners and implemented without exception across the new system.

With regard to paragraph 4(1)11, again we would like to see stronger language used to ensure accessibility and accommodation for people with disabilities. We would like to lend our support to that.

On the next page, with regard to clause 4(2)(b), we would like to see that criterion amended to "operate within a framework of accountability to the public and to the government of Ontario." We feel that in the spirit of this consultative process and how the vision of OTAB is seen to be in the future of labour market partner participation right down to the grass-roots level, public accountability must somehow be built in here.

With respect to clause 4(2)(c), the wording regarding the distribution of funding "in a fair and appropriate manner" is too vague. What is fair and appropriate is obviously highly subjective, and we feel that criteria must be developed which clearly set out conditions by which funding is to be allocated. We're concerned, once again, that too much is left to the regulations and may not even be included in them.

We also recommend, with respect to the criteria, the addition of wording which stipulates that funding be disbursed to programs in compliance with equity policies. We feel that it needs to be part of the board's policy that the

disbursement of training funds is linked to the delivery of training programs which comply with equity.

Furthermore, all program practices and curricula must clearly not be racist, sexist, ablest, agist or discriminatory in any way. These points have been brought out many times in the local board consultations and we feel it's time they were included in a quite directive manner as this system gets up and running.

With respect to "Directors," subsection 9(4), we would like to see an amendment to see the selection of directors reflecting Ontario's linguistic duality and diversity and overall gender balance ensured.

The composition of the governing body, councils and local boards needs to reflect the value placed on equity. Fully half of the representatives of business and labour should be women, and women and men must reflect the diversity of this population.

With that in mind, we submit that subsection 18(1), on local boards, and subsection 19(1), on councils, should also be amended in accordance with the subsection 9(4) amendment. Again, we're saying that this needs to be stated explicitly in the bill and not just left to the regulations, from which, again, it may be omitted.

With respect to public meetings, we recommend that all directors' meetings be open to the public.

With reference to committees, we have two points, subsections 20(1) and (2), on the next page. We feel that reference committees must be established for equity groups. That should be documented here and funding must be provided for equity groups and reference committees.

These groups need to be established in order to develop systematic and ongoing input to the needs identification, program design and training purchases. For equity groups to truly play a significant role in the design and delivery of this system, these resources are necessary. There's a wealth of experience and information which women have through their experience and training in the workplace which needs to be availed of by both the governing body and the local board level.

With respect to "Regulations," subsection 30(1), we feel that that needs to be amended to state, "The Lieutenant Governor in Council will make regulations in consultation with directors and their reference groups." Again, a great deal of the training system infrastructure has been left to the development of regulations. We feel a clear commitment to the participation of all labour market partners in the development of these regulations is required.

Finally, with respect to the regulations themselves, we feel that a clear commitment to the inclusion of equity principles and policies within these regulations is also required. We therefore recommend the following additional regulations:

- prescribing a system of accountability and evaluation for all the boards, including the local boards;

- respecting the development and implementation of training equity policies throughout the system. We feel that this is the government's opportunity to ensure consistency with other social policies and to ensure equity and access.

- prescribing criteria for equity in the composition of OTAB's council and local boards;

- prescribing a review of the legislation within a specified time period.

In conclusion, I'd like to say that we feel very strongly that the development of an equitable and accessible training system really shouldn't be about equity groups battling obstacles each step of the way. Rather we would like to see an allied effort through which individuals and institutions join on many levels to transform our training programs and the workplaces in Ontario into new models of equity, dignity and cooperation. This legislation has the potential to set the precedent for that effort. We feel that developing Ontario's economic strength in the context of a fair and just society depends on it.

I'd like to thank you for the opportunity to bring forward our recommendations today and look forward to the enhancement of this bill.

1530

The Acting Chair (Mr Mike Farnan): Thank you for the presentation. We'll see if there are any questions.

Mr Offer: In rotation at this caucus?

The Acting Chair: Yes, it would go to the official opposition.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. I agree with just about all of your presentation, actually. I think it's extremely thoughtful and I really have shared your concerns about these regulations. I have already prepared some amendments that would reflect your concerns. Too much of this has been left up to regulation and I would hope that the ministry will be prepared to bring forward next week, in our clause-by-clause analysis of the bill, regulations that it may already have developed so we could see that.

With many of the areas prescribed for regulation, I will be making amendments next week to enshrine them in the bill itself. I really think those should be there. You're right. It's sort of too permissive by the board to do this through regulation. I just wanted to share that with you. I think my colleague Mr Offer has a comment.

Mr Offer: As I was listening to my colleague, I wanted to ask this question dealing with the purpose and objects of the legislation. Individuals, groups and associations have come forward and spoken to the objects and the purpose, which are fairly extensive. In fact, the argument could be made that they are so extensive they blur the focus as to what something like this should be doing.

I'm wondering if you could comment on a general thought as to the type of purpose and objects this legislation has and how extensive they are. Basically, you could do whatever it is that you wish to do, and of course that carries a problem in that the board, the agency, will now lose a focus as to what it maybe should be doing. I'd like to get your thoughts on that.

Ms Cullaton: Maybe I'll begin and perhaps Elizabeth could elaborate on her thoughts.

Our experience with women's training, especially with respect to non-traditional, is that there are some very clear pathways from upgrading to bridging programs to pre-trades-training programs to workplace-based training programs which work. We have many examples of those.

I think in terms of a focus, the continuum of training is something that could be constructed and respected and focused on in the development of this training system. This scattergun approach that we have now is not working, and we have examples in women's non-traditional experience that show that pathing is very good.

We had a woman recently in London who was a single parent who did the women in trades program who took welding who then got a job at General Motors, where she still works, and took teacher training and is now teaching part-time at Fanshawe College.

It's that kind of work, of pathing, that I think we know how to do, and that's why the contribution of equity groups in terms of the structure and the programming and design of this training system is so critical, because we have experience of how that can be done.

The second piece to my response to you would be with respect to the question of training for what. That kind of pathing then must be tied to the economic development issues at the community level, and again, women's experience of community development and economic development is not well known and yet it is very, very worthwhile to tap into. I think that ties for me in the fact that I think there is an opportunity to focus the development of this training system based on the expertise around and we already have some good models to follow.

The Acting Chair: We'll move on to Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you for being here today and for making your points and giving us some specific ideas for amendments. We'll look at them carefully. I have to say I agree with you.

At the very beginning, you caught my attention by talking about women remaining occupationally segregated and the lack of emphasis here on apprenticeship training. The numbers are astounding. I thought I knew them, but I did not know that only 5% of apprentices in Ontario are women, and of those, only 2% are in the non-traditional fields, such as motive power, construction and industrial trades. So thank you for that. How do you think OTAB is going to improve that?

Ms Bohnen: What we'd like to see is that training dollars ultimately be directed only to those programs that can demonstrate an equity focus; that they're accessible to women; looking at things like bona fide qualifications to enter training programs and bridging programs to upgrade women to grade 12, if that's a requirement, and expectations that trainers are sensitive to the special learning needs of women, because I think ultimately we need to try to get a critical mass of women into these occupations.

What happens now is that women are very isolated in predominantly male training institutions and workplaces. We do all this work to get them in and then often they're discouraged, and it's really very lonely and isolating out there. So we need to really put more attention and make more training dollars available to that kind of continuum that Lynn mentioned, so that we can start getting a critical mass in there. That, ultimately, will effect retention.

Mrs Cunningham: We're really talking here about focusing on perhaps numbers and a change in attitudes as well.

Ms Bohnen: And the kinds of programs, the continuum, that Lynn mentioned.

Mrs Cunningham: Have you given any thought to the role of education in this whole OTAB structure?

Ms Bohnen: You mean the primary and secondary system?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes.

Ms Bohnen: Our committee has generally focused more on post-secondary, but I think we certainly would be in sympathy with any efforts that are there to support girls and boys having the full choice of careers, and the curriculum efforts particularly to expose girls to trades, technology and occupations in those areas and not drop out of math and sciences, and really keep with it, because that's absolutely critical.

Mrs Cunningham: One of our great fallbacks or neglects in Ontario is getting young people into our apprenticeship training programs. We know if we don't want them to drop out of school, we'd better do it before they're 16, because that's when they drop out. So to talk about apprenticeship training for 17- and 18-year-olds, if you're talking about attitudes and focusing, it's much too late. We haven't had a really great discussion about that here and I think one of my great criticisms has been that there hasn't been the kind of cohesive, focused discussion between education, skills development and training.

Ms Bohnen: We would support that. It's very difficult for a single parent to think about devoting years and years of her life in training and living on minimum wage, even though the ultimate career will be worthwhile if we can just try to get to them earlier.

Mrs Cunningham: I must admit that I thought the same way when my children were younger, but I never thought for a minute that I, who was a school board trustee for 15 years, would miss the boat with regard to my own family. As I look back on it, it's really true that they didn't have the opportunities to have those kinds of attitudinal changes, not my own children particularly, but certainly the school system. We couldn't get moving forward.

The cooperative work programs were developed during the 1960s and 1970s, but that's not the apprenticeship certificate with the secondary school graduation diploma. I would urge your group to take a look at that, because I think we have to start much sooner. What's missing here, of course, from education's point of view, is that there are only two seats. It's hard to have a voice when you've only got two seats.

Mr Sutherland: I want to dispute with my colleague from Mississauga North that this bill isn't focused. I think it is focused and it outlines the challenges of training and the multifaceted approach that needs to be taken to have successful training.

Mr Offer: Multifaceted focus.

Mr Sutherland: Approach.

I just want to take a minute here to talk about what I consider to be a great success story about a woman participating and moving ahead. That is about my sister, who is employed with the Oxford County Board of Education. She was encouraged by the board to go through and get her operating engineer's licence. She is now the head custodian at one of the high schools, the first woman to do that in Oxford county. It's a great success story and we're all extremely proud of that type of accomplishment.

I think that does draw attention, though, to the encouragement that is needed. Certainly, the supervisors and of course the board has an employment equity program, so there was a very supportive environment, workplace environment anyway, to encourage her to go forward. I think with the amount of determination that she had, she was going to be successful anyway and overcome whatever obstacles may be there. She's also now out doing community forums to try and say to other young women that there are opportunities out there and to look at some of those non-traditional roles.

I think your program has been successful, but we know there's still a great deal more to do, as you've presented today, and of course the women's coalition on training presented yesterday in a very theatrical and vivid way. They certainly got the point across quite well about what needs to be done.

1540

The Acting Chair: Would the delegation care to make a response, or should we move on to another question?

Ms Cullaton: I think my response would be that something you said, Mr Sutherland, caught my ear, which was that your sister would have made it anyway, without the help. Those are the only women without these extra training initiatives who do make it. I think that's why our numbers are staying low, because we need to provide a system that changes the systemic issues and allows the average folk, be they women, visible minorities, disabled or whoever, to enter their chosen occupation and live to their full potential.

Mr Sutherland: Yes, you're right.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks very much for your presentation; I really appreciated it. I was wondering about the question, though—earlier in these hearings Mr Offer mentioned how he thought that the government sees OTAB as being the be-all and the end-all to Ontario's future, in effect, that it's going to change it beyond recognition perhaps. I'm not sure we do see it that way. It is, after all, directed at training, and that's an important element.

I'd like your comments, actually, taking into account that OTAB was set up in consultation with the labour market partners, because it's seen as sharing the responsibility for designing training with the people who are going to benefit from it and, given that, that they've come up with the language that they have in the legislation, that there is some agreement that this is the kind of language we can go ahead with. This reflects, I guess, where we are as a society now.

Of course, the amendments you've suggested would change that, I think, to attempt to change things, to seek to

ensure that programs be done in an equitable manner, that there be allowances made for including people who have been traditionally left out. I'm just wondering, how fast do you think these changes can be made, given that this kind of system that we live in now has evolved over a number of years without, I guess, the kind of success, obviously from the figures you've presented—without being successful in including everybody in our workforce in the way that we'd like to see them included? How fast can we move on this, in your view? Can we do it just through legislation, just by putting it in the legislation? In other words, by removing "to seek to ensure," and as you say, to put in, "to ensure"? Can we do that through legislation, considering that the groups themselves that are going to be doing it—

The Acting Chair: There's very little time for a response, and I would urge you to allow the delegation to reply.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay, thanks. I think they have the idea, though, of what I'm getting at here.

Ms Cullaton: Do you want me to respond?

The Acting Chair: It's up to you.

Ms Cullaton: Very quickly, voluntary efforts through the federal program for employment equity haven't worked. I regret that any kind of legislation in our society is necessary to change behaviour, but if we wait for attitudes to change, it will take for ever. How quickly we can move will depend, I think, on how definitive we make the legislation and this training system, and obligate people to put their minds to these issues once and for all and to act on them.

Ms Bohnen: I think we've seen that Bill 79 is required. We support the passage of Bill 79 to achieve employment equity in the workplace and we would like to see OTAB mimic that in terms of training systems and do feel that legislation is required. Once it's in place, I think we will see change.

The Acting Chair: Thank you very much, Lynn Cullaton and Elizabeth Bohnen. On behalf of the committee, may I thank you for your representation of the Ontario Committee on Trades, Technology and Operations Occupations for Women. Your participation makes democracy work. Thank you again.

OTAB EDUCATION AND TRAINING INTERIM STEERING COMMITTEE

The Acting Chair: The next delegation is the OTAB Education and Training Interim Steering Committee. Margaret Williams, I believe, is presenting. If you could come to the front and identify yourself and the other members of your delegation and the positions that you have.

Ms Margaret Williams: I'd like to start by introducing us. My name is Margaret Williams. I'm a member of the education and training steering committee. This is Jean Faulds, another member, who represents community-based trainers, and Malcolm Buchanan, who represents the school boards, specifically the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation. I represent the private sector, specifically two

private sector organizations. I have a private training company myself.

What I plan to do today is read the paper that we've put together as a joint presentation from our committee—that shouldn't take more than 10 minutes—and then open it up for questions. I would like to request about a minute at the end for closing comments just reiterating our main points. Here we go.

The education training sector is one of the four key labour market partners preparing for the implementation of OTAB. The five constituency groups are private trainers, community-based trainers, school boards, universities and colleges. We have demonstrated a consistently high level of participation and cooperation throughout the developmental process of OTAB. We appreciate this opportunity to provide our comments and request that these comments be added to those recorded during the committee hearings.

In the course of the past 10 months there have been two general meetings of the Wider Education Training Reference Group, comprising over 100 educators and trainers. Our 15-member steering committee has met a total of 15 times to nominate, interview and select the education training reps on the local consultation panel and nominees to the proposed board, and to provide feedback on the legislation in general and, once legislation is approved, the mandate in particular.

In this established tradition of participation and cooperation we've identified a number of concerns that we share as a steering committee. These include: The legislation has been drafted in isolation from an overall provincial policy on labour force development and lifelong learning, the legislation does not adequately deal with the issues of accountability and openness, and educators and trainers are not adequately recognized as key players in the development and implementation of future labour force training and adjustment.

To address these concerns, we strongly recommend the following:

(1) That labour force development programs enhance the quality of life as well as the skills and employability of the individual;

(2) That labour force development be part of a comprehensive economic development strategy;

(3) That legislation be amended to include a mandatory audit and review process; that a formal evaluation, audit and review of the composition, mandate and funding of OTAB, its provincial councils and local training and adjustment boards be undertaken within two years of their establishment and regularly thereafter; that a formal evaluation and review of the management structure and associated lines of accountability be completed in consultation with reference groups within two years and regularly thereafter;

(4) That the failure to ensure adequate representation of educators and trainers on the OTAB governing body be addressed by ensuring representation of all five education and training constituencies. This includes private trainers, community-based trainers and educators, school boards, colleges and universities on all OTAB councils, local boards and other future associated committees and boards;

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(5) Subsection 12(2): That before any provincial councils or local boards are established the issue of accountability be addressed through guarantees that there will be public access to all meetings, reports and decision-making processes, both at the provincial and local levels;

(6) Clause 30(1)(b): That the board of governors in execution of its duties utilize a consensus decision-making process and, if and when necessary, a triple-majority decision-making process. We recommend that on any issue the board first endeavour to reach a consensus. Failing this, a triple-majority vote would confirm any motion. This would require a majority of business reps, five of eight, a majority of labour representatives, five of eight, plus at least 50% of the remaining labour market partners, three of five;

(7) Subsections 20(1) and 20(2): That the establishment of permanent reference groups be mandatory and OTAB shall provide funding and administrative support;

(8) Subsection 30(1): That the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall make regulations in consultation with OTAB directors and reference groups.

In section 30 we recommend an addition to clauses 30(1)(a) through (k): "respecting the establishment of an appeals process with regard to funding allocation decisions and respecting the establishment of a review process for OTAB governors."

That concludes our paper, and we'd like to open it for questions.

The Acting Chair (Mr Kimble Sutherland): I believe we're starting with the Progressive Conservative caucus. Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: I was looking forward to this presentation this afternoon. I wasn't quite certain what you would say, but I'm not surprised. But I am curious because, in fact, in your position you were advising the government with regard to how education could have input.

Ms Williams: We were trying, yes.

Mrs Cunningham: How come we only ended up with two seats?

Ms Williams: I don't think we're the people to ask that question of. All the way through the process of consultation, since February last year, we have been saying, "Three into two don't go." We are five distinct constituency groups, each of which has got lots of various sub-constituencies, and to try and find two people who could represent the interests of all those five, never mind the subsets, is next to impossible. We've been saying this all the way through.

Mrs Cunningham: Well, there seems to be a heavy hand somewhere, because earlier today the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario seemed to think that two were sufficient, but they also advised us that they have a former employee of their colleges in one of the seats. We asked them what they'd think if in fact they didn't have one of those seats. So I'm sure the government members are taking this very seriously. In fact, I can see Mr Wilson thinking out loud right now, because this has been a position that has been put

forward by anybody who has any interest in education. We're not certain what people are going to say ahead of time, so I'm happy to know that you feel that way.

I'd like to ask you about the triple majority, too, and ask you how you see that working. We've heard the double majority, but could you explain what you mean by the triple?

Ms Williams: Maybe Jean would like to address that one, or Malcolm?

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: Maybe I'll give it a stab. We're looking at five out of eight for business, five out of eight for labour, and at least three out of five for the remaining groups, which are the advocacy groups and include the education trainers. Now, I should like to point out for the record that we have had some discussions with then-minister Richard Allen on this issue. I'm not sure whether the committee has received this letter dated February 2 from Richard Allen regarding the issue of how to break an impasse, because we try to operate on a consensus model and we agree with that in principle.

For the record, he talks about the following: For any motion, "Only where consensus cannot be achieved, and where any other intermediate steps have failed to yield an acceptable resolution, would an issue come to a final vote. For any motion to be confirmed in that vote, it would require the support of a majority of the full board (at least 12 of 22), including a majority of the business representatives (5 of 8), a majority of the labour representatives (5 of 8), plus a vote from each of at least two of the remaining five labour market partner groups."

Our difference is that it should be at least three out of the remaining five. So he's on the right track. If you take our suggestion as Margaret has read into the record, that's how the triple majority would work, and we think it would be a fair way if consensus cannot rule the day.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you for that. Actually, with respect to the minister, he did say he was listening on that point with the committee, so I'm not surprised that you've got the letter and I'm happy that you did read it into the record.

I'd also like to ask you how you feel about apprenticeship training with regard to—I saw some of you in the room when I asked a question before. One of the great concerns we have in training for our young people is the fact that our school system right now, I feel, is not responding to the apprenticeship training needs. It's because they have never been asked to, and we're looking for that kind of direction from the government. But as students are really dropping out of school around the age of 16, shouldn't we be looking at this apprenticeship training in cooperation with secondary school graduation and our secondary schools? Isn't this a thrust that this committee should be looking for?

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: You're looking at me. There's no question—I think the committee is well aware that there are some existing programs now, such as the school-workplace apprenticeship program, SWAP, which seems to be growing. We're very encouraged in the secondary school area that this is going on.

Yes, we would agree that it should be encouraged. At the same time, I think we have to point out that business and the others who benefit by this apprenticeship program should also be involved in a bigger way than what they currently are to provide the workspaces, and we need to work with the unions to make sure that the interests of the unions are not going to be undercut by displacing somebody with seniority and tenure. It's an issue that has to be looked at; there's no question. We need qualified tradespeople in this province.

Mrs Cunningham: With the lack of your voice—I really feel there is a lack of your voice; if we haven't been listened to in the past, and I don't think educators have been with regard to training at all, and we've had so much to do anyway—at that OTAB level, perhaps the real losers will be business and labour, because if they don't hear it from you directly, how can they then respond to the placement needs in the workforce?

The Acting Chair: A very quick response, please.

Ms Jean Faulds: All I can say is that I affirm what you've said. I agree. I don't know if any more of a response is required than that, which is to say yes.

The Acting Chair: Moving on, Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks a lot for your presentation. I certainly appreciated hearing from you, and the perspective is good coming from three different areas.

Of course, it does raise the question of representation which you have yourself raised, and we've heard that a number of times. It's one that intrigues MPPs because we're expected to represent our constituents. It should come as no puzzle, it seems to me, even though it is raised: How can people represent others? It's just of necessity. Mr Turnbull frequently mentions that we if we had the number of representatives on this board, the number of groups coming before us that think they should be represented there, we would need something like the SkyDome to hold them all. On the other hand, 22, which is what we're suggesting for the directors, seems to a lot of groups to be a good number, a workable board to come to decisions. So there is quite a bit of support for that.

Now, with the educator trainers, it's recognized that there are five groups identified there and two seats. However, there are the steering committees, in the first place, who came together, as you pointed out, a number of times to discuss these issues. We've heard from people who have participated in these meetings that they were surprised to hear the overlap, I guess, in dues, or the amount of agreement they had that they didn't realize was there because they had never come together before. The way they could work together, I think, was never recognized before, leading again to the suggestion that maybe two people could represent the group.

But more than that, I think the issues would be discussed before they went to the board, so that rather than having five people sit down at a board meeting and then having to agree among themselves just how they would put the educator training issues, this would be discussed beforehand and that kind of view would be taken to the board by the representatives. So it was seen that that

was—and especially by the group from the community colleges that we heard from this morning from the community colleges. They were comfortable with that arrangement. I'd like to hear your comments about that perspective, that again it's a representational view.

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Ms Williams: I think if I'm to make my comment as a representative of the private sector, I'm quite satisfied that the two people we have nominated are going to represent all our interests on the strategic board very well. We went through endless discussions and ramifications of the various constituency groups and how they would be represented through these two nominees at the board level, and we're talking about the provincial board at the moment, because at that point we need to take off our constituency hats and put on our provincial hats as to what's best for the training systems in this province.

However, when you get down to specific councils and specific local boards, things change. There, the providers of training need to have a more direct voice. I think I speak for most of the committee when I say that. I see Jean nodding. Jean, do you want to add to that?

Ms Faulds: Yes. I would just like to add that I think it does go beyond an issue of representation. There is the whole issue of ensuring that what's about to be done by OTAB is successful. I think that to ensure that it's successful, as many people as possible who have intimate knowledge and intimate experience with training and education being there to provide their input and their experience will only ensure that it happens. I think it goes beyond an issue of representation and is an issue of more guaranteeing that that transference of knowledge goes on among everyone participating in the structure.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think you raised it in your presentation. You called it accountability, if we could call it that, to make sure the system is actually doing what it says it's supposed to do.

Ms Williams: But more than that I think, Mr Wilson, it's a question of not only is it doing what it's supposed to do, but is it doing it in the best and most efficient and most effective manner? That's where the people who are in the business of training and education can provide valuable insights and valuable help.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes. I think that's been attested to by the fact that you're a part of the process at all levels.

Ms Faulds: Hopefully.

Mr Gary Wilson: I guess the other thing, though, is that one of the operating methods here, or ideas I should say, is that it's a consumer-driven system, and that is something that I think is reflected in the breakdown in the numbers; that is, business and labour taking the lead with their number of seats and then the other groups having proportionately fewer, but again, because it's from the consumer-driven—I'd like your comments on that idea.

While we want to use the expertise of the educators-trainers, we don't want to lose sight of the fact that the people who are going to be needing the training are the people who are going to be driving this system. We think

that is the way of guaranteeing that it will meet their needs and that the programs will be suitable.

Ms Williams: Where to start?

Interjection: Where does it end too?

Ms Williams: Personally, I can only speak from a consumer-driven business, because I wouldn't be in business if I didn't listen to my consumers and respond to their needs and story. I don't have the luxury of working for a publicly funded institution. Jean, I think, is in a similar boat and may want to address this too.

Ms Faulds: I think I'd like to address the term "consumer-driven." That would suggest that all of those who are somehow going to consume education and training are involved. I think the reality is that they're not all involved. Who is involved are those groups that have been identified as being traditionally underrepresented or disadvantaged. So we don't have total consumer representation within the proposed structure to begin with.

How that relates to educators and trainers, I think that's putting an awful lot of onus on educators and trainers, not only to be the experts in service delivery and going and providing information from a service delivery perspective, but then somehow to also represent all of those consumers and their individual perspectives.

That only, to me, compounds the issue of two representatives. How can you expect them to fulfil some sort of consumer representation issue in addition to their role as educator and trainer? So I'm not sure "consumer-driven" is a proper word to describe the model to begin with, because I'm not sure we have all consumers there.

Mr Gary Wilson: I see—

The Acting Chair: We're going to have to leave it there, Mr Wilson, sorry. Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Thank very much for your presentation. One thing I'd ask is just if Mr Buchanan could submit that letter, a copy of it, so that it would be part of the record of this. You read part of it there, but then it would become part of the record of the committee. That would be helpful, if you have it. We could just get copies of it and give it back to you if that's your only copy.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: That would be fine; not a problem.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you. I liked your approach really focusing at the beginning on accountability. I think that's very important. I think that's an aspect of this bill that is lacking right now, that we are now bringing together 700 civil servants from various ministries into this one new entity called OTAB and it's just going to get off the ground. It's going to have, I suppose, some challenging days ahead of it to get itself working and getting itself established and then establishing the local boards, and I think a two-year review would be timely. I think that's a very good idea.

I want to talk to you about your idea on the triple majority, because I've got some amendments prepared. They're not going to completely satisfy you, and I want to tell you why and what I want to do.

I like the concept that in a sense the customers, the consumers should drive the training process. I can see why the government has it eight and eight labour and business, but I don't think there are enough of you people there at the table. So what I'm proposing is that all five trainers will have seats on the board but your vote won't count as much as the other two.

To me that's the balance so that you're there, so that you know what's going on and so that you have a say, but I'm going to go with a double majority. To me that's going to be the balance, so I need at least five of business, at least five of labour and then only three of the remaining nine that are now there, because the education equity groups in my model would be nine.

To me that strikes the balance, because I want to try to make this effective and not just sort of curry your favour and say, "Yes, we're going to put you on and you get full votes." I understand that principle of the two main components really driving the system, but I think educators have been left out on the side table in the reference group. You need to be there, and so there's a two-way communication happening. You're informed of what's going on and you're contributing and you're going to have a say but the say will be weighted towards the other two groups.

That's the amendment I'm going to be bringing forward. I just wanted to let you know that, because to me that's sort of the balance, how I see what other people are saying and what you're saying. I certainly welcome any comment you have on that, if you care to.

Ms Williams: An interesting proposal. My initial reaction would be, how would the equity groups feel about that. Let's envisage a couple of scenarios where that kind of a vote might take place and over what issues, and where would the objections be and what might some of the fall-out be. That would be my first reaction. I'd want to explore those.

Mr Ramsay: I think the principle, as far as I'm concerned, has to be that the process is driven by the main groups, you know, the workers—

Ms Williams: I agree with that principle wholeheartedly.

Mr Ramsay: —and the employers.

Ms Williams: Yes.

Mr Ramsay: But everybody has to be at the table, and I think you've been underrepresented in this particular model. I think we need to beef up your representation there so we get all aspects of the training and education side.

Ms Faulds: If I could just respond very quickly as well, I think it's possible to go a step beyond just making sure people are at the table, and somehow conveying to them that their presence at the table is meaningful. I think that's the attractiveness of the triple majority, because it still gives business and labour, as the leaders, that leadership role. We'll always be there in fact, regardless of the number of other labour market partners that are there, because at either time if they're not in agreement, then the motion is not affirmed.

I think, to go in another direction which doesn't acknowledge that at least the other partners have a meaning-

ful role in being there and having a vote, sends a negative message to those other partners. Although your suggested amendment acknowledges an increased presence, I think we also have to have a meaningful presence while maintaining the leadership of business and labour.

Mr Ramsay: Would you be happy if it was a double majority plus 50% of the other group?

Ms Faulds: Do you mean 50% of the group or 50% of the total vote of the other group?

Mr Ramsay: Of the total vote of the other group.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: I think our suggestion of three of five would solve the problem, Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Okay. Now the number would change, though, because I've got you up to nine because I've put the three other educators-trainers on the board. All right. Still, over the weekend—

Ms Williams: Then you have to look at where those other six might go, might be, and how they would feel about a voice potentially never being heard. That was one of the issues we had to grapple with around the table when we came to discussing the double majority versus the triple majority, and we felt the triple was the fairest way to go.

Mr Ramsay: There's certainly a risk in giving more input there but not giving the power. Obviously there's a risk, so it's a matter of trying to find the balance.

Ms Williams: I think you're grappling with a couple of issues there.

Mr Ramsay: Yes, absolutely.

Ms Williams: So were we.

The Acting Chair: I think we're going to have to leave it there. You wanted a minute or two to do a wrapup summary comment?

Ms Williams: I really just want to reiterate the key points. The one issue we would like to emphasize is that this whole process be open; the issue of openness and accountability is absolutely crucial. The other issue is the lack of representation, and I've been pleased to hear some of the comments about support for our view that educators and trainers are not adequately represented at the moment.

The final point I'd like to make is that we are the current suppliers of training and education services. We know that we're doing some things right and some things wrong, and we do want this process to work. We think it is too important to get bogged down in partisan politics and constituency issues. We all have to take a broader view of this and look towards the future of Ontario and what is best for Ontario's population. I'd like to thank you very much for the opportunity of being here today, and we will be submitting this written brief within the next few days.

The Acting Chair: Margaret Williams, Jean Faulds, Malcolm Buchanan, thank you very much for coming here today on behalf of the education and training interim steering committee, and I thank you for all your work on that committee as well. We appreciate your input into the process; that helps to make our process work here in the province.

Ms Williams: Thank you, and good luck.

Mr Malcolm Buchanan: I hope this legislation works so I can get on with my life.

The Acting Chair: Is Nicole Galszechy here, our next presenter? I don't see Nicole at this time. Maybe what we should do is take a 10-minute recess, and we'll reconvene at 4:25. We'll recess till 4:25.

The committee recessed at 1613 and resumed at 1630.

PERSONS UNITED FOR SELF-HELP
(CENTRAL PETERBOROUGH)

The Chair: It's 4:30. The next participant is present. We are going to carry on. My thanks to Mr Farnan and Mr Sutherland for their assistance. This participant is Catherine Miller. We've got 30 minutes for you. Please try to save at least the second 15 minutes of that half-hour for questions and dialogue with members of the committee. Go right ahead. Tell us what you want to about yourself and then tell us what you will about OTAB.

Ms Catherine Miller: I'm from the Peterborough area and I also am affiliated with PUSH (Central Peterborough) in that area. One of the extra papers that you have in the papers I had given you is just one of the many types of things that are coming out in our own area about what's been happening with organizing OTAB and LTAB and people sort of jumping on the bandwagon before anything has actually been set up.

My feeling is that when people are setting up criteria and things before the government has actually given out its papers of how this process is going to take place, it's already isolating people, segmenting certain groups ahead of other groups. It's already making it very difficult for people with equity issues to get involved, because historically they don't have the funds, the supports and the resources to do that type of thing. It's already setting up a conflict sort of situation between the labour market partners. In that type of situation, I think it's going to be very difficult for people to go back, sit around a table and be in a flexible, participative sort of setting where there is no conflict.

One of the suggestions I felt would be appropriate for the government to take is to set up a non-partisan mediator for local areas, so there would be a way of putting in an appeal process for people who felt they were missing out in fair representation for their areas, and to oversee that selection or election process that was going to be taking place.

I feel that's certainly an area for the disabled community, without having the resources to do outreach as quickly as some other groups may have, and would aid service providers in taking that role over.

Also, I just wanted to say that I think it is a very important thing that we change our training processes in Ontario, and because of our rapid change of structure of our economy and populations of the Ontario community, I think it is very appropriate. But for those populations to have an equal and fair representation on this type of board, so we can utilize those funds for training to the best that we can, I think we're going to have to have some further commitment from the government that is going to state that labour and business will also reflect the community,

seeing that only 2% of the seats on OTAB itself have been designated equity groups or equity-seeking groups.

I think government should urge business and labour to take a role in providing a reflection of the community as well, so we don't see, unfortunately, white, able-bodied males on those boards as well, that they can at least reflect some of the diversity of the communities they're going to be serving in. I urge the government to look at that.

I also feel it's important for the local process to be contained within the local board and after the local process and the OTABs are established. It's also important that training to enable the people who are going to be set up to provide that direction of creating new programs, and seeing those directions and programs, have some training in the equity issues, and that the equity groups try to help facilitate that, because in my feeling there is no one who knows more about, say, accommodations than a person with a disability. People with disabilities understand what accommodations mean, they understand what accommodations are and they are the ones who can teach that, just like women are the ones who can teach about women's issues.

I think that type of training is going to have to be done at the local training board level and the Ontario training board level to the representatives, so that they can fulfil their obligations on that board. I would like to see a firm commitment in funding those types of programs for those appointees for those boards.

I think the disabled community is expecting that OTAB and LTAB will be the opportunity they've been lacking in the past of getting involved in the training programs and setting up training programs that will be suitable for their own needs and setting up training programs that can link to other services and other organizations that can aid it in fulfilling those training programs.

Services that are available now are oftentimes not appropriate because they have too long a waiting list to get on them, such as VRS. Some places you have to wait up to three years to actually get a piece of equipment that may help you in a training program. Most training programs aren't three years long, so it would be very difficult to access that type of equipment that would help someone in a training program. I think there have to be direct linkages to services for people with disabilities so they can participate. If not, it'd even be covered under OTAB with that type of thing.

There's been in the past also very inappropriate training where people get on a training loop and never actually get full employment. They're constantly being retrained and retrained and retrained, and they go from one training type of program to another training type of program. They may start out on a UI training program and then have a UI training chargeback program next and then a welfare program training. They never get off the training loop and actually into full employment. I think that for those members of the disabled community who are lucky enough to be on UI, that is certainly the picture they're running into, the fact that they have to constantly be retraining and uptraining, and oftentimes they have more skills than the trainers themselves who are providing that training to them.

With my disability, because I have an invisible disability and people don't see it when I walk in the door, it's very difficult for people to understand that it needs to be accommodated. In my own personal history, I have had a lot of training programs that just had so many barriers that it was pretty impossible for me to actually complete the training program to my best ability, and I feel that's a large waste of funding. If I'm not going to be utilizing those training dollars to get employment, then those training dollars are wasted.

For instance, I was involved in a training program where I took two courses at a university. It started in September, and I didn't receive my books until December and I didn't receive my writing utensil until March. So for all those months that I was going to that course, I really was not able to fully access the written material or fully access my own writing skills in that. It really was inappropriately used funds, in my mind, because I wasn't able to use it to my full potential.

I think that happens a lot when you have to link several different services together, because it's such a long red tape of going through this service and then going through that service and getting assessed and then going through all different types of assessments. Oftentimes, if the individual brings notice to the fact that there is a problem with the training program, he or she is given life skills. I've been given life skills on every single training program I've ever gone on, because they feel I'm a hard person to deal with or someone who has bad behavioural problems or something like that. All it is, I'm asking—

The Chair: Miss Miller, I understand.

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Ms Miller: I'm asking for accommodation, not asking for something that's out of the ordinary, asking so that you can participate in the actual programs that are being offered, nothing that's unrealistically asked. I think that with those programs, because you have to be assessed whether you're appropriate for the program, and you may shift from program to program, it's difficult to have things that aren't linked under one roof. I think that's all.

The Chair: Thank you kindly. I think Mr Wilson, who's the parliamentary assistant to the minister responsible, would like to ask you some questions.

Mr Gary Wilson: I would, Mr Kormos, and I expect my colleagues might as well. You've raised a number of issues, Ms Miller, and I thank you very much for your presentation. It's certainly, I think, fitted in with some of the other things we've been hearing.

First of all, I want to set your mind to rest. You seem to be concerned that the local boards have already been formed, and certainly that has not happened. The legislation refers to them, but they have to be done in conjunction with the federal government and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, as well as the provincial government and OTAB, when it's set up. So certainly the formation of those boards has not been determined yet.

Ms Miller: I realize it hasn't been determined, but there's a lot of action going on in the community, and people have already taken it on themselves to create an

atmosphere where it's impossible for other people to participate, because they've set up the playing field already.

I understand it's not been set up, and I know that the government hasn't even published the book on how the local boards are going to run. The bill isn't even through the House yet. But people are jumping on the bandwagon. I think some form of mediator is going to have to be looked at who can go into some of these areas to help smooth that partnership out, because it's going to be very hard to be screaming at someone one day for your seat and then sit around a table the next day and communicate politely with them.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think from what we've heard from some of the committees, that has actually not taken a day to happen; I mean overnight, that people are coming with interest. We are pleased to see the enthusiasm, and it's not surprising. But given the way our present training system works—and you certainly have very graphically shown why changes have to occur—I was wondering whether you are pleased to have access to the table where these decisions will be made; that is, through OTAB, through the representative of people with disabilities, to know that these issues will be raised very directly to people who have perhaps not taken them into account as well as they should have in the past.

Ms Miller: Yes. I think it's a good step to have people—at least we're sitting around a table now. Before, we were always left out. I think we also have to train people who are also sitting around that table as well to understand why we've been left out.

Mr Gary Wilson: You mean with life skills, is that what you're thinking?

Ms Miller: Yes, they need some life skills too, but they need to understand our language, just like we need to understand their language. When I say "accommodation," I don't mean my hotel room.

People need to understand the language that we're all talking, because I have been involved in some of the reference steering committee meetings and it seems to me that some of the language from each side—I don't understand business' language any more than they understand my language. We all talk in these little catchphrases and technical terms, "adaptive technology" and things like that, and people don't understand what those terms are saying. So I think some of that's going to have to filter through and not just be the responsibility of the person who's sitting on the board for people with disabilities.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. Why, in your view, should business, for example, come to understand the terms you use?

Ms Miller: Because it could aid them drastically in their own business fields. If they can sit and talk to a company in Germany and talk about how their adaptive technology is creating these jobs—people see disabled individuals as a burden sometimes, and that's sort of a sad note, but all this adaptive technology leads to more technology and we are now a community of technology.

Just because I have a computer to do my work—I have to have a computer that I can talk to. That's because of my disability, but other people can use that computer even if

they don't have a disability. The technology was created for people with disabilities, but it doesn't mean you have to have a disability to use that technology. I think people are very afraid of changes, but I think technology is the way we should be looking, and adaptive technology for people with disabilities is very transferable to other areas.

Mr Gary Wilson: I guess there's not only the benefit that others in the community can immediately realize, but the benefit that comes from including people with disabilities in society, in the way society works.

Ms Miller: Yes, because right now it's a wasted resource. There are a lot of people who are a very big, wasted resource.

Mr Gary Wilson: Are you hopeful about this kind of change? Do you think it can come through something like OTAB? Already we're talking about how, when you come together to discuss these things even among your reference group, you hear about the problems that arise with the language, say. But then when you do move beyond your reference group to the table where other people are whom you haven't dealt with in the past, or at least in this cooperative way, do you see that as a hopeful sign and a step in the right direction?

Ms Miller: I see it as hopeful but I think the government's going too fast. I can't educate my community quickly enough for the responses that the government is asking for. I may get something that we need to think about and discuss for the government at a reference group meeting, and we're given two days before a meeting to discuss that type of thing within our own communities and then bring it to a group meeting.

It's too quick. I can't adequately talk to people and see how they're feeling and see what their views are on, and then you're only getting my view. If the restructuring is going to be done, I would hope that it is going to be done in a better manner, therefore it's going to take a little bit of time, and slow down the process so that everybody gets a chance to speak.

Mr Gary Wilson: Are you satisfied with what has come up so far, though, as far as the structure of OTAB is concerned? I can foresee that at least with the structure in place—and then I guess you're still considering about the generation of local boards which you've already mentioned at the beginning, but at least the awareness, for the best results to arrive. We've got to make sure people are aware of what's happening, that the constituent groups are fully aware of what their membership is thinking.

Ms Miller: Have I been happy with that?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes. Do you think so far that the—

Ms Miller: It certainly has slowed down since last year, but last year at this time it was pathetically too fast. They were asking for us to act too quickly. I'm afraid that as soon as the bill comes in, it'll all go too quickly again and that we're going to have to make responses quickly and we're going to have make decisions quickly. Then obviously it won't be fair because people will be left out. I think when those people are left out, then good ideas are left out.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly, yes. Just to go back then to the things that are being left out now, again you say that the reason for going about this slowly is because of the people who have been left out and the waste that has accumulated because of that, the reason for including people in the decision-making and in the wider economy. I would think from what you're saying that there are a lot of people who have been left out in the past in ways that we haven't recognized.

Ms Miller: Right. So you're asking me—

Mr Gary Wilson: Whether you see that at least as a hopeful development, that we are putting in place ways of addressing that kind of waste.

Ms Miller: I think it's a good step but it still says there's only 2% designated for equity groups on the OTABs.

The Chair: You've done your best, Mr Wilson. We've got to move on to Mr Ramsay.

1650

Mr Ramsay: Catherine, welcome. I really enjoyed your presentation. It's very insightful for me to hear your story. I'm glad you're here to tell your story. I find it interesting that you have required all these life sort of skills and training, that you like to kick up the dust a little bit when you aren't getting the services you require. Good for you. You just keep on kicking up the dust and demanding the services you need.

I'd like to ask you actually about that a little bit because you are saying it's a bit of a mismatch there, so you could help me in understanding what the problems are. You said you had attended university, yet your equipment was late in arriving. I take it the equipment was not being supplied by the university that provided the course, and I'm just going to guess here, but maybe by vocational rehab of the Ministry of Community and Social Services or some agency such as that.

What seems to be the problem when everything seems to be geared up and you're going to a course and you're enrolled but yet your equipment doesn't arrive? What's happening here? What's wrong with the system?

Ms Miller: I was entered in two courses at the university and the training program itself wasn't okayed until a week before the courses were up and going. Trent University didn't actually know I was for sure going to be enrolled, so they couldn't get my books on tape until they knew I was going to be enrolled.

I have severe dyslexia so I cannot read or write. Written information is very hard for me to process, as well as I have to have sort of a one-on-one communication. I can't have outside noises, to understand what's going on. They could not get the books on tape because they really didn't know I was going to be enrolled until a week before and those things take quite a bit of time, because that service is offered through the States, not through Canada. That was the problem with getting the books, and the books didn't arrive till December.

That's one sort of linkage program to the training and then the other linkage program was vocational rehabilitation services. I was okayed for the equipment and everything was going to come through, but the paperwork

hadn't been done and the paperwork wasn't going to be done and it didn't get done until March. My device to enable me to write and put writing on paper and get writing back with voice from the computer didn't arrive until March. Basically I didn't have a book until December and didn't have a writing utensil until March and the course was only from September to April.

In my mind, that's very inefficient use of funds because I could not fully participate in that course. I begged and borrowed from all my friends that I could get, saying, "Could you sit down and type this out for me?" as I'm trying to dictate it to them, but that's sort of just because I didn't want to fail in a course. But if people don't have the supports to link those programs together, it's still going to be misused funds.

Mr Ramsay: In your mind, what's the solution to this? How can we organize this better so you're better served?

Ms Miller: They have to be all under one roof, for one thing. I feel that if you need accommodation, whether that be on a piece of equipment or accommodation by just the type of courses that you're taking or less of a course load, that type of accommodation has to be under the training policies. It can't be with another branch of government because it doesn't link together; they never work. It's either they have too hard a case load and they can't get to this case and they can't get to that case, and by the time they get to opening up your case to make sure that you have the equipment, your course is over.

If that had happened on a job site, where I was on work placement or something, I'm sure the employer would have just said: "This is too frustrating for me. I'm never hiring another disabled person again," because obviously I wouldn't have been able to do a work placement in that type of situation because I didn't have the tools to do the work placement. So no wonder the business area is frustrated with that setup as well, because they wouldn't want to hire me if I was unfunctional for all those months before my equipment came.

The Chair: Mr Turnbull, please.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you very much, Catherine. You bring a useful focus to this discussion. In your brief you speak about an appointment of a non-partisan mediator to facilitate selection process. I take it that's selection of the person with disability who would sit on the LTAB?

Ms Miller: I think that's to oversee the entire selection process of the LTAB. This mediator would not be someone who is going to dictate how it is going to go, but there has to be somewhere that people can go and say this, other than me to run to Toronto. This is what's happening in the area and I feel that it's not fairly set up so that there would be a chance for an appeal process for people who feel that it's being railroaded by a certain labour market partner, so that it is a fair selection and so that people will have somewhere to take those concerns.

Right now, as far as I see, there will be no one. Other than the fact that the book hasn't been developed in all the literature that I have seen, the local area will be taking this over and there will be no interruption from government and no one there as an accountability measure.

Mr Turnbull: Are we talking, though, about the operation of this in terms of the services they deliver to people who are consumers of training, who we're obviously most concerned about, or are we talking about the operation of the appointment to these boards?

Ms Miller: I think it's the actual setup of the board, the actual selection process, so that it's not taken over by a labour market partner and no one gets any input into how it's going to be done. That's what I'm really concerned about. I'm concerned that people from the equity groups may be left out because it's going to be taken on by, say, labour and they're going to decide how it's all going to be run and they're going to set up everything. In my mind, I don't see any recourse for that unless there's some one person to take those to before everything gets too involved and everybody builds up all this conflict.

Mr Turnbull: Catherine, really what I'm driving at, though, is that if we're talking about a local board, let's just use as the example, while it's not necessarily the composition of a board, the OTAB has one director who is somebody with disabilities and one representing racial minorities and there's one representing women. The letters say that in some manner or form you have that type of composition in your local board. Recognizing that during these hearings we've had every imaginable group coming to us and saying they should have a seat at the table, if you allowed that, you would have a board which was absolutely dominated by special interest groups. In no way should you read this as me being unsympathetic, but I'm seeking guidance from you as to how we approach that.

1700

Ms Miller: I sympathize with you, because that's exactly what's happening in the local area. People are fighting for that territory. Hopefully, once the book comes out, they will firmly state that it will reflect the same type of process that OTAB in construction will set up. So it would be the eight, eight, four and two type of setup.

If that's the case—I am a consumer in my area—how will I be able to choose who the consumer for that area is going to be? It may be taken over by service providers. It may be taken over by a number of different areas. What I am asking the government to do is look into having some kind of mediator there so that all these concerns can be heard. If I feel that this individual is not going to best serve the disabled community in that local area, I would be able to state that.

Mr Turnbull: In your example, if you feel the person representing the disabled community, for whatever reason, is not truly reflective of the needs of the disabled community at large, then you would take it to this person and put your case forward and they would be able to adjudicate that.

Ms Miller: Right.

The Chair: Ms Miller, the committee and I thank you sincerely for taking the time to be here with us today. You've provided some very valuable insights into the impact of this legislation.

Persons United for Self-Help has been in the vanguard across the province, certainly in my community of Welland-Thorold, of creating and fighting for access. They've been

provocative, they've been bellicose and they've not hesitated to offend if need be when that's what has to be done to attract attention to the need for access and for justice for those people whom they speak for.

I very specifically congratulate PUSH and you now for having played that role and continuing to play that role. I think it's a valuable one. I think the committee agrees with me that there have to be people who are prepared to perform that function or else we all get stuck in some sort of weird static inertia.

In any event, thank you, Ms Miller. It was a pleasure having you here. We hope you will keep in touch with members of the committee or the committee collectively. Have a safe trip back home and good luck with your local LTAB.

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

The Chair: We are now carrying on as a committee. There is at least one issue and that is the matter of the structure of the coming week when the committee is scheduled to discuss, debate, clause-by-clause, Bill 96. Is there any motion or a proposal seeking unanimous consent?

Mr Ramsay: To do what?

The Chair: You can seek unanimous consent to do damned near anything, Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: I propose that we go in camera and just have a little discussion about—

The Chair: Do you want to go in camera or do you simply want to relieve the legislative broadcast people and let them carry on with the rest of their day?

Mr Ramsay: That's fine.

Mr Turnbull: I really feel that it's quite useful to have this broadcast. There are a few concerns that I'd like to bring to the table.

The Chair: Thank you. There's certainly not unanimous consent. Is anybody prepared to make a motion in that regard? All right, let's go.

Mr Ramsay: I just think it'd be a good idea to discuss next week's agenda as we would be entering into clause-by-clause and try to get a consensus with the committee on what would be the best schedule to adhere to, knowing that we are all very busy and would have other commitments next week, just to maybe have a discussion how we would order ourselves. It might not require going 10 to 4 or 10 to 5 or whatever like it has this week. I just wanted to propose we work on clause-by-clause maybe in the afternoons for the four days or something.

The Chair: First let me ask this, because this wasn't a scheduled part of today's agenda: Is there agreement that if consensus can be reached, we can reach it, because we're certainly not going to have any votes about that this afternoon. Let's have some discussion about it then. Let's hear what people have to say.

Mr Sutherland: We can have some discussion. I think it should be officially put to a vote maybe tomorrow.

The Chair: That's what I just said, Mr Sutherland. Go ahead; we're wasting time.

Mr Sutherland: Sorry. I was just going to say I think some consensus can be reached about how much time. I

think the ultimate goal, though, would be to ensure that we had finished the voting procedure next week. As long as we get a sense of a strong commitment that that's the goal of everyone, to finish the voting next week, I think there may be some openness if we feel we can do that in a less amount of time than scheduled.

Mr Turnbull: I would just like to point out that we have the concerns that we believe that there's been very useful presentations made at this committee and some time should be spent pondering them and preparing the amendments, rather than immediately meeting next week. My party is very concerned at the fact that there's a suggestion that the House won't be returning until perhaps May, which is absolutely ludicrous, but nevertheless it indicates that there's certainly plenty of time and we should not be rushing this through at an untoward speed. Rather, we should have some sober consideration of the very useful presentations and come forward with well-balanced amendments to this. I think allowing an extra week would not be unreasonable.

Mr Sutherland: If I could just comment, I don't think we can really deal with speculation as to when the House may or may not return; I think we have to work on the basis of assuming that it's returning during the usual time as regularly scheduled and work upon that basis. I thought our goal was to have the hearings, have the input, have the clause-by-clause vote here at committee and have that ready to go back for when the House comes back in.

Mr Ramsay has indicated his party has put through some of the amendments. We've had interim reports from research, a summary of the recommendations that have been submitted to the committee members, to allow them time to develop some amendments on that. If some people feel there's extremely new information that's come forward, we understand some of that, but I think there has been a lot of information presented and the summary of recommendations should allow people to prepare what their amendments are going to be.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd just like to say too, Mr Turnbull, that we've had this time booked for quite a while now, with the understanding that we would be using the fourth week for clause-by-clause. I think those of us who have been here every day have taken that into account and are pondering what has been said, both in the hearings and after them over this last—well, it's now been four weeks since we've begun.

Interjection: This is the third week.

Mr Gary Wilson: This is the third week of hearings, but we had a two-week gap that allowed us to think about what was presented in the first two weeks. So we've been intently involved in this. I think there's something to be said for considering them as soon as we can, which would be next week.

Mr Turnbull: With all due respect, I have to point out that we have a legislative calendar, and it seems to have gone out of the window with this government. They have no interest whatsoever in maintaining that legislative calendar, and I think when we're dealing with something as important as this—essentially what you're saying is that

we just ignore the people who've made presentations since we came back after that two-week break. Given the amount of time that seems to be contemplated before the House goes back—and it's certainly been floated out by your party; it isn't something that I've dreamt up—I'm suggesting that it might be appropriate for us to take some break and consider the amendments.

1710

Mr Sutherland: If I could just respond to that, I think the point of the matter is that time has been given to that. I think everyone has been thinking. There have been new points brought up this week, I would agree, but some of those new points have been consistent in terms of the general themes of what people may want to see as amendments, some of the specifics. I assume that people are organized enough that they can be able to put those things together.

I know we all have busy schedules, but the sense is—from the beginning, people knew what the time lines were, but the expectations were to have the votes next week. It would be my view that people were planning according to that and that we would be putting amendments together as ideas came forward on what should be done and can still be putting amendments together tomorrow and on Friday for presentation for next week.

Mr Turnbull: Frankly, with respect to planning ahead, we know how badly the government has planned ahead in the past, and we know that we staggered around with the legislative calendar last year. We came back late. We sat late. Every time that you were going to try some power tactic—"Unless you pass this legislation, we'll sit a little longer"—we were told that you'd sit as long as was needed. Then, amazingly, you took your tail between your legs and closed the House down as soon as scandals broke out. So let's remember what your party has done with respect to planning.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, do you want to respond to that?

Mr Sutherland: With all due respect, Mr Turnbull, I think what we're trying to discuss here is the process for here. If you want to get into a match back and forth about tactics in the House, we can certainly get into—

Mr Turnbull: It's not tactics in the House.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Turnbull, you've had your turn. It is my turn right now. If you want to get involved about how the House schedule is developed, I can bring up the reading of lakes and rivers into the record as stall tactics that were done as well. So if you want to apply guilt, I think we all can take some guilt.

Mr Turnbull: Let's have no nonsense about this. Mr Kormos here—

The Chair: One moment.

Mr Turnbull: —stood for 17 hours in the House and was plugged and applauded by your then-leader of your party.

The Chair: I am indifferent as to how many people talk at the same time. Indeed, if anything, it makes for good television for the folks who are watching. But we've got people working really hard trying to translate this.

We've got Hansard people working really hard trying to record it. You do them a disservice by more than one person speaking at the same time.

Now, which of the two you wanted to carry this on? Because the reality is that we haven't got any consensus. Even if there was one, this committee is, by legislative resolution, instructed to meet for certain days during certain weeks. Short of a consensus among House leaders, this committee will meet next week and consider this bill clause by clause. Whether it finishes this bill or not, that's what will happen next week. Of course, any member is welcome to go to any number of House leaders—at present there are three—to try to encourage them to arrive at a consensus which changes the resolution that was passed in the Legislature.

That having been said and done and that clearly not having been resolved by way of contacting House leaders—and I would have thought that somebody would have been able to say, "Yes, we've already contacted our House leader and that House leader has contacted the others," but we haven't heard that—Mr Ramsay's question, a valid one, is a question about the hours of sitting next week to deal with clause-by-clause. If House leaders choose to do differently with us, we're all victims of the whim and fancy of House leaders. What have you got to say about hours?

Mr Ramsay: I was just going to suggest that I do have quite a few amendments to bring forward. I'm not sure if the government does and I'm not sure what the third party has, but I would think that four days, three hours a day, might be enough to do it. That's my estimate, but then, of course, I don't know what other amendments might be coming forward. So I was just proposing that maybe we set the time as being between 1 and 4 or something, all four days, something like that. It's just a proposal so that we know and staff knows and the legislative counsel who will have to be here knows. It's going to be the deputy legislative counsel, who is the author of the bill and at this time is preparing my amendments on behalf of our caucus. We should decide pretty soon and let staff and everybody know.

The Chair: Do you have any idea as to the number of amendments, or are you in a position to indicate that?

Mr Ramsay: Actually, I haven't tallied them all up.

The Chair: More than 50?

Mr Ramsay: No, not more than 50; I think there are 20.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, I think your points were well taken about the process. It may be best just to start at our regular time to ensure that we allow enough time, and if we finish early, we finish early. Given the fact that a good portion of us have to come from out of town, if we're going to be here, put in a full day, and if it freezes up for an extra day back in our constituencies, I think that's fine too.

Mr Turnbull: I suggest that is an appropriate course to take, that you sit normal hours, because we remember with great chagrin how during the Labour hearings we were told that we couldn't get all of our amendments read in properly and debated, and they were just deemed to be

read at the end of the committee process, which is disgraceful and should never happen.

The Chair: It's unfortunate that the House agreed to that and directed that it should happen, because that was an entirely different scenario wherein there was time allocation, wherein every amendment that hadn't been properly or traditionally or regularly presented was deemed to have been presented and then voted on. Not a very pleasant exercise; I've been involved in it on both sides of the fence and didn't like it in either instance.

But the suggestion is, perhaps much to the dismay of people watching, that this committee meet its regular hours, which are 2:00 to 5:00 on Monday and 10:00 to noon and 2:00 to 5:00 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. That's what was anticipated by the subcommittee when it discussed this before these committee hearings started, and it was concurred in by all the members of the committee. Is that what the proposal is right now? There's unanimous agreement in that regard. Thank you. Are there any other matters to resolve?

Ms Anderson dearly wants some direction as to when this committee looks for her summary of presentations. People have been making careful notes, I know that. People have been here sitting in the committee room paying careful attention to all of the submissions throughout these hearings. Ms Anderson is but one person and has been working very hard. The committee doesn't expect her to produce that before Monday of next week, does it?

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chair, I'd like to, as I have already, personally congratulate Ms Anderson for the work that she's done. I found the interim package of the summary recommendations very helpful in my deliberations in preparing my amendments. I have taken my own notes from this week and incorporated any changes there, so I do not require another package to be produced by our legislative researchers. So from my point of view, I don't need any more.

The Chair: What's the position of other members, or do you feel prepared to make one today as compared to waiting until tomorrow?

Mr Sutherland: For the record, I certainly think that a package being produced is good in terms of other people who may want to access that. Obviously, the sooner the better, but if Monday is a reasonable time of expectation, then I think that would be fine.

The Chair: Is there agreement in that regard? Mr Sutherland is right: Individual members who have been here, sitting patiently and listening carefully, might not specifically need a report, but there may be members of the public or other MPPs who would enjoy that. All right, the consensus is that Ms Anderson would be called upon to provide that to the committee when it meets on Monday.

There's one further matter. Is there any agreement as to when caucuses ought to be expected to provide, basically, disclosure of their amendments? Tomorrow at noon would give each caucus sufficient time to contemplate the proposed amendments. Does anybody have a comment on that?

Mr Sutherland: Maybe it would be best if everyone could take some time to think about it, and then when the committee meets tomorrow we could set the exact time.

The Chair: We'll deal with that before the noon break tomorrow, then?

Mr Ramsay: Could I just ask a question, Mr Chair, to the clerk?

The Chair: Yes, sir.

Mr Ramsay: What is the usual manner of filing amendments in a committee? What's timely?

Clerk of the Committee (Ms Tannis Manikel): It really varies in the committee. A lot of committees do have time between the public hearings and the clause-by-clause consideration, but generally I think about the shortest time period we have is the Friday, for starting clause-by-clause the following Monday. They need to be in the clerk's office by noon on Friday so that they can be distributed.

Mr Ramsay: So noon Friday could be a possibility. Okay, that's fine.

The Chair: There's no requirement of disclosure, and there would have to be, in my view, some pretty clear and strong direction by a committee that would have the effect of barring somebody from introducing an amendment during the course of clause-by-clause debate. We're talking here about suggested time frames; we're talking about courtesies to parties.

Mr Ramsay: To reproduce these better for all the members.

The Chair: Well, no. Members can reproduce their amendments before they give them to the clerk. We're talking about giving members of the committee a chance to say, "We have to consider this," or, "We have to take it back to our research people." We're talking about not taking people by surprise, and that's courtesy. If you want to take somebody by surprise, then you've got to live with what happens in committee when those things happen, and sometimes that can be more pleasant than other times.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chair, obviously we're going to engage in this discussion tomorrow, but yes, I think we need some time frame, because I certainly would hope that government members especially would give my amendments due consideration. So I would like to give them as much time as possible for themselves and their officials to give them consideration, in the hope that maybe some of them might be supported.

Mr Turnbull: I can't speak for our critic. She will be here again tomorrow.

The Chair: Okay. We will deal with that, then, in a more concrete way at the beginning of the lunch break tomorrow.

Thank you kindly, people. Thank you to Mr Farnan and Mr Sutherland for their assistance during the course of the day. We are adjourned until 10 am tomorrow morning.

The committee adjourned at 1722.

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

- Cunningham, Dianne (London North/-Nord PC) for Mr Jordan
- Farnan, Mike (Cambridge ND) for Ms Murdock
- Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South/-Sud PC) for Mr Turnbull
- Martin, Tony (Sault Ste Marie ND) for Mr Waters
- Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway
- Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Dadamo
- Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Klopp
- Wiseman, Jim (Durham West/-Ouest ND) for Mr Huget

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Anderson, Anne, research officer, Legislative Research Service

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

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***Acting Chairs / Présidents suppléants:** Farnan, Mike (Cambridge ND); Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND)

Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

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Murdock, Sharon (Sudbury ND)

*Offer, Steven (Mississauga North/-Nord L)

*Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

*Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)

*In attendance / présents

(Continued overleaf)

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Intersession, 35th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 18 February 1993

Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and
Adjustment Board Act, 1993

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième intersession, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 18 février 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre

Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Thursday 18 February 1993

The committee met at 1001 in room 151.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

ONTARIO METIS ABORIGINAL ASSOCIATION

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 10 o'clock, which is when we were scheduled to commence. Our first participant is the Ontario Metis Aboriginal Association. Sir, please come forward, have a seat. We have Mr Huget, Mr Offer and Mr Carr here, who are but a fraction of the committee. Would you like to speak only to them or would you rather wait until more committee members arrived

Mr Reg Burns: No, I'm fine with the members here this morning.

The Chair: All right, sir. Go ahead. Please tell us who you are and what your position is. Please tell us what you will. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for questions and dialogue with members of the committee, sir.

Mr Burns: My name is Reg Burns. I am with the Ontario Metis Aboriginal Association. My position with OMAA is the coordinator of the memorandum of understanding on economic development. The MOU agreement, signed in April 1991, is a tripartite agreement signed by Canada and the province, with OMAA engaged in identifying, developing and implementing the strategy for economic self-reliance and fair and equitable access to all programs for all Metis and non-status aboriginal people represented by OMAA in Ontario.

Today the leadership of OMAA find themselves in an embarrassing and uncompromising position. They have been prohibited from consulting with their constituent communities on the OTAB project because their share of the OTAB consultation funding has been channelled to them through a first-nations-driven process. We should be here today as an equal and willing partner in designing policies for programs and delivery mechanisms to our communities. Instead of having the recommendations and results from our consultations on this process, we are at the mercy of this government providing funding to the first nations government for our allocations to the Metis nation and non-status off-reserve Indians OMAA represents.

If in fact the last minister responsible for the OTAB project was sincere in his statement that in a true partnership you don't just share ideas, you share some power and responsibilities, we would therefore ask that OTAB

consider OMAA and the 70 community locals it represents across the province to become equal shareholders in your process of cooperation and partnership, the premise on which OTAB was formed.

The Ontario Metis Aboriginal Association does not support the Aboriginal Intergovernmental Committee on Training committee in its endeavours to administer the OTAB funding through the Pathways to Success network, as is being recommended by the on-reserve first nations people of Ontario. OMAA, the recognized provincial territorial organization representing the Metis nation, aboriginal people and off-reserve non-status people of Ontario, recommends that OTAB administer its funding directly to the PTOs as per their requirements and needs through existing Ontario structures and programs.

Aboriginal people are defined as being Indian, Metis and Inuit, which therefore entitles the Metis nation of people its own right and privileges to programs and services under the Canadian Constitution. OMAA, the elected body representing this group of people, has been coerced into becoming part of the Pathways strategy that is totally first-nations-driven and does not allow for the Metis nation and non-status participation in policy and program design, development and delivery. The Pathways program has only recently allowed OMAA to return to the Regional Aboriginal Management Board of Ontario tables. Their invitation allows OMAA to attend meetings in a non-voting-seat capacity and at OMAA's expense, since the RAMBO committee has decided there is no funding available for OMAA to attend these sessions.

OMAA had originally withdrawn from the Pathways process since it was quite evident early in the beginning that our communities could not access Pathways funding. Our zones and local communities do not have the luxury of the infrastructure and administrative funding mechanisms that the first nations have. Our elected officials both at the zone level and the local community level are all volunteers without any funding to equally access these programs and services. In fact, OMAA receives core funding for the entire province that is considerably less than what some single first nation reserves receive.

The most obvious example of discrimination in the Pathways program in our communities was identified from the very first Pathways project approved for the OMAA Four Winds Metis local group in Iron Bridge. It took the local president one year to realize that they were not able to overcome the barriers and restrictions necessary to access the funding. Their very first obstacle was the lack of skills to rewrite a new proposal, given that this type of training had previously been funded by Canadian Employment and Immigration Commission without any employment result. The local could not afford to hire a consultant, and the

original tree-cutting program was written by the community college. Next it was identified that the local was incapable of supplying the administrative and financial management skills necessary to administer the program because it was not financially capable to carry the accounts payable, administer the accounts receivable, operate with holdbacks, did not have the means to carry the payroll and had a past history of not satisfying the CEIC in order to have the CEIC release the Pathways funding.

These types of problems do not exist in first nation communities, given their department of Indian Affairs backup and the funded administrative positions.

The OMAA executive board was requested by the local to intervene and assist it in writing the new proposal and supplying the financial and administrative competencies necessary to satisfy the CEIC. Once all requirements were satisfied, the local community provided a six-month training program for nine Metis trainees by a Metis instructor and built a medical centre for the town of Iron Bridge with the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines supplying the funds for material and CEIC supplying the funds for wages and delivery by the OMAA vocational centre.

Once the OMAA board of directors had learned of this discriminatory practice in Pathways, they sent out a directive to the locals and zones not to participate until this problem was rectified. OMAA executives, assisted by the Metis National Council representatives, met with CEIC senior government officials and presented their case. CEIC was questioned by the Metis National Council why there was a parallel Metis Pathways process in Manitoba and Alberta but not in Ontario. The CEIC requested OMAA to present a position paper on the situation. The paper was submitted to CEIC and then, the next step, OMAA was requested to attend a RAMBO meeting, to find that its paper had been given to the RAMBO group of first nation people to decide their destiny. Naturally, the first-nations-driven Pathways group decided not to support a separate process, nor were they concerned with the plight of our communities.

Given the time lapse, the lack of cooperation with the federal government and the CEIC directive that OMAA could not access non-native training dollars requested because of the Metis combined native and non-native blood lines, the OMAA board of directors submitted and gave the directive to return to the Pathways tables. Upon returning, they found the first-nations-driven Pathways group not allowing them to access design, development and delivery of this aboriginal training initiative to the OMAA communities.

With that history of lack of cooperation, OMAA was asked to participate in AICOT, to which they agreed, to facilitate community consultations on OTAB funding, programs and services. As OTAB is already aware, the first nation group have been procrastinating on this process, dragging their feet because of a desire to control more than OTAB represents, and at the same time not allowing OMAA to carry on with its training needs and access training funds.

Therefore, the Ontario Metis Aboriginal Association respectfully submits that OTAB should allow OMAA to

complete its own community consultation process, separate from and not dictated by the first nation groups, and to access funding directly from the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board for the training needs of the Metis nation and off-reserve non-status people without being hindered by the Pathways to Success network, which has been labelled as the Highway to Hell by the OMAA constituents. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Ramsay.

1010

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Well, what a mess. I'm glad you're here today. I had no idea that this was going on and it's good to have your view, because we've had many first nation people come before us this last week, and basically what they've said was they don't want to anything to do with OTAB, of course, because they have their own program, Pathways to Success. I guess I just presumed that all aboriginal people probably were captured by that program. So it's sad, but at least it's good for you to be here today to point out that this isn't so and that you're knocking on the door to OTAB while the others don't want that. It sure clarifies in our mind what needs to happen.

Have you formally made this request to the Ministry of Skills Development, that you want to have your consultation completed and then be part of OTAB?

Mr Burns: No, Mr Ramsay. We have not made a formal request, given that we were part of the AICOT process, the Aboriginal Intergovernmental Committee on Training, and we were to access consultation dollars. Right up to recently, those dollars were identified to be dispersed but have not been dispersed to us as of today. Had we had access to those dollars, we could have done the consultation and reported back to you with what the actual needs of our communities are.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to ask our legislative researcher if she would find out from the ministry where those dollars are and why they have not been released. We'll see if we can get that information for you later on today. I guess what OTAB's thinking will be now is that it wants to move on because it's now beyond the consultation process and doesn't want to wait for any other groups, I suppose, to complete a consultation.

I guess I would suggest that your formally make that request, if you haven't. There's a new minister. Your brief here obviously documents very well the situation that you find yourself in. That certainly would be a great basis for a letter giving very substantial reasons why you want this extension of time.

It's good you're here, because I have been prepared to move a motion that would remove the option that's in the OTAB legislation that aboriginal groups could request of the minister a seat on OTAB, and that is because—and I verify this every time a group's come before us—all the first nation groups before us so far have said: "We've got Pathways to Success. We don't need OTAB. We're well serviced. We have in a sense our parallel track. Just take us out of that. We don't want to be part of this."

You give me food for thought, and hopefully today we might get some answers from the ministry as to what your situation is. Thank you very much for your presentation.

Mr Burns: Thank you, Mr Ramsay. I just want to comment on that. Our greatest apprehension is that we don't want to get caught back up in this Pathways situation again. Therefore we do support the OTAB process and we would like very much to become part of the development of it.

Mr Ramsay: Fair enough, because you're having difficulty, obviously, with the other program. This program, as far as I'm concerned, should be open to you if that's your wish, and it seems to be your wish. Thank you very much. It's been helpful for me.

Mr Gary Carr (Oakville South): Thank you very much for the presentation. I would like to echo that we really appreciate the position you've taken and hopefully that will be worked out.

I was interested to know your overall comments on OTAB. Is there anything else you can see that we should be doing with OTAB to make it a better system? Obviously you've got this particular situation that you talked about, but in the broader sense, is there anything else you would like to see as we work through this piece of legislation?

Mr Burns: OMAA is in a process of decentralization. We're trying to set up eight centres across the province that are going to be the beginning of self-reliance for our local communities. Ideally, if we could have an OTAB office located in our centres, we could service our communities. OMAA has five zones across the province of Ontario and there are approximately 70 locals. Therefore these eight centres are going to supply the infrastructure that we're lacking today to access funding and services to our communities. If OTAB could be part of that network, that would be ideal.

Mr Carr: I may be going farther down the road and assuming that everything gets settled, but do you have any idea in terms of the amount of money you would be interested in receiving, and how do you see that helping your community, specifically with some of the training it would get? How do you see it actually working? What type of skills do you see being received and how do we do that?

Mr Burns: I'm not exactly clear on all the OTAB programs, but I do know that our communities have a dire need for the full spectrum of training. That's from entry level of literacy and numeracy training to upgrading programs to skills development to trades training to occupations development.

I have developed a planning path, a progress path, on the kinds of training that have been identified and what is required, right from the common core to the occupational core to the specialty areas too. So it becomes a full spectrum of training that requires ongoing continuous training.

As an example, this Iron Bridge program I alluded to was just an excellent training facility with a good, usable product and our students felt very, very satisfied with it. The only problem is, that was the end of the training. Six months after, there is no more training for these people to carry on with. The program was designed to parallel the

apprenticeship training program so that these students can sit down with the MSD and say: "Here's what I've done. Could we get credit for it?"

Mr Carr: What are the people in the community saying in terms of the need? Are they aware of the government's initiative and what are people saying? I guess they don't know the details, but what is their overall feeling? I'm now talking about the average person out there who will be getting the training. Putting aside whether OTAB is going to be run properly or not, I think we all realize that we need to upgrade our skills in all areas. What are the people saying about needing skills? Are they aware of it and do they feel confident that they're going to be able to get it through this program?

Mr Burns: They definitely are much more than aware of it. It's become such an environment for them that it's a lifestyle. It's so necessary for training to begin at the entry-level training programs and then in senior management programs. There's a full spectrum of training that is required by our communities.

Our problem is that I don't have any OTAB materials. I was not able to consult with our communities because of our lack of funding, not receiving our dollars. I do know that had I been better prepared to go out and do that or been able to do that, then I would be able to come back to you with the specific questions in mind. I'm just going from my experience of setting up training programs within the communities and the problems that exist today.

Mr Carr: Thank you very much and good luck with it.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Thanks very much for your presentation, Mr Swain. It certainly shows that this is a very important issue to your community. I would like to delve a bit more into the needs of your community, the training needs that are there now. Could you just describe some of the important things that you think could come from the OTAB project to meet the needs of your community, given that it's expected there will be local boards where you would have a very direct role in the design and the provision of training programs?

Mr Burns: Right, Mr Wilson. My name is Reg Burns. I'm the MOU coordinator. Ron Swain is our president.

Mr Gary Wilson: Oh, sorry. I was looking at the letter.

Mr Burns: What I could see happening with the OTAB process is having us designing programs for our communities, developing the programs for our communities and delivering the programs. We have a huge problem putting the labelled need of classes in a mainstream, white community college. Our people are having a lot of problems being in that environment. If we were part of designing the programs and developing and delivering them, we would certainly be able to work very much closer with our people, and if we are lucky enough to have our own institutions, then I do see true success in allowing our people to move forward.

1020

Mr Gary Wilson: We're hearing that from other groups too, and this is part of the reason for including the labour market partners, the people who actually need the

training, in consulting and designing and participating in the provision of the training programs. I think the one thing we're hearing from everybody, where there's agreement, is that the programs aren't working as effectively as they could be, and that's the reason for trying to share the responsibility for providing the programs, just to get that immediate response to—well, even before the response to the programs, I guess what is needed in those kinds of programs—you say they have to be more culturally sensitive to the needs of the people you represent. In some programs, at least, that doesn't happen, and we can see that that's a discouraging aspect.

Do you think you'll have any problem getting representatives of your community to sit on boards? You've mentioned the AICOT consultation, which doesn't appear to have worked as well as it might have. Do you think that giving this other what you might call a forum for discussion has possibilities for success, that this will work out?

Mr Burns: It definitely will, Mr Wilson. Our communities are quite anxious to become part of the process and participate.

Just to elaborate further on your question on the kinds of training we are looking for, I developed two programs that were in the hospitality and tourism industry. The Ontario Metis Aboriginal Association purchased a hotel-motel operation in Sault Ste Marie a number of years ago to supply an institution of training in the hospitality field. They went through the whole process of renovating the facilities and brought everything right up to standards. I proceeded to design this program, and then I approached the community industrial training committee to purchase training in our facility. The CITC did purchase training, but it purchased it at the community college. They did not purchase it at our facility.

As a result of that—we had two classes of Metis students going through that—it was just a terrible, terrible experience for our students, being in that environment. We have a number of problems that are not just particular to our group of people, but had our students been able to be in our own institution with our elders and as problems arose we could have handled them, we would have had a much higher success rate of students going through that program. The success rate was very, very minimal. If the college regulations had been applied properly, no one would have passed that course. They had to make a number of exceptions to allow people to complete.

That's an example of the kinds of problems we have as the Metis nation of people. We tried to do our best, and we have most instruments of success in place, but we don't have the cooperation to do that.

Mr Gary Wilson: Was there any forum for you to talk to the community college about these problems and to try to get its understanding of what you needed?

Mr Burns: Oh, definitely. The community college and OMAA have an excellent relationship. As a matter of fact, the Sault College of Applied Arts and Technology in Sault Ste Marie is looking at signing an articulation agreement with the OMAA vocational centre, which is a provincial centre that we have established for training of our

people. The Sault College is very cooperative, and it was not because of any fault of the college that we had these problems, but it was the process by which the programs were purchased and then the monitoring of those programs. The delivery was done exceptionally well. It was the mechanisms that were not in place that were the problem.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, I think that's the advantage of bringing people around the table from the different perspectives, representing different points of view, to get these things out in the open. I would say, right at the beginning so these things don't happen, this kind of mismatch between the terms of the program and the people they're trying to serve. We've heard from the community colleges that things are changing there as well, that they are becoming more responsive to the community needs, because the workforce is changing and the workplace is changing as well. Again, one of the chief features of OTAB is to be more responsive to those changes, and it's by getting your experience there in a way that you can make it clear to the people who are providing training that these needs have to be met, but also then using your own experience too, that they can affect the kinds of programs you deliver.

We're very hopeful that this will happen, because there are other groups that are coming forward too. Obviously training isn't working as well as it can. You're not the only group that is being disfranchised on this issue that you're not getting the kind of training you need. It's something we expect will change dramatically with the responsiveness that the board allows, the overarching provincial body, and then the local boards, because they're going to represent the local community.

I'm pleased to hear that you think that kind of consultation can exist, that your OMAA is represented at that table to make your point. Is there anything else you'd like to add?

Mr Burns: No, sir.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks very much for that.

Mr Burns: You're welcome.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Burns. The committee appreciates your participation in this process. You've made an important contribution and provided some new insights. That's obvious by the response you received from members of this committee. We are grateful to you and to the Ontario Metis Aboriginal Association for your interest and for talking the time to be here with us this morning. Thank you kindly, sir. Please keep in touch. Take care.

The next participant is at 11 o'clock. We will recess until 10:45. Thank you.

The committee recessed at 1025 and resumed at 1046.

The Chair: We're ready to resume. The Income Maintenance for the Handicapped Co-ordinating Group is here. Although they weren't scheduled until 11:30 am, they are prepared to proceed. We'll have the members come in.

This has been a welcome opportunity for me, because of course I have been able to slip down the hall and watch the auto insurance proposal.

Mr Carr: How's that going, Mr Chair?

The Chair: It's not going well, but I was distressed that I didn't have an opportunity to raise the fact that Dominion of Canada General Insurance is stiffing one of my constituents. Once again, no-fault simply don't work. Insurance companies have short arms and deep pockets. Here's a young man, injured as an innocent victim in an accident, entitled to the basic \$185 a week no-fault benefits. Dominion of Canada simply says, "No way, pal, you're on your own." Obviously it's in their interest to do that. The more people are discouraged from collecting those no-fault benefits, the less money the insurer has to pay out. No wonder they racked in almost \$1 billion in new profits last year, and there's nothing about the new legislation that's designed to whip the auto insurance industry into shape and it's a real shame.

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): Well, Mr Chairman, they're in the business of collecting premiums, not paying benefits.

The Chair: You got it, which is why we need public auto insurance now more than ever. The savings to the consumer would be a real boost at this particular point in our economy, and the issues of fairness to drivers and justice for innocent victims of course would be addressed. In any event, I appreciate the opportunity to have gone over to the auto insurance committee simply to watch the progress there.

We have our members in. There's a couple more we're waiting for. We have the fine services of the whip's office here. They take care of us. Mr Carr, it's nice to have you on the committee today.

Mr Carr: My pleasure.

The Chair: No problems travelling in this morning?

Mr Carr: No, we're here and ready to go.

The Chair: I understand you've been monitoring it, because it has been being broadcast.

Mr Carr: Yes, I have.

The Chair: And Ms Marland.

Mrs Margaret Marland (Mississauga South): You're happy to see me back?

The Chair: It's nice to have you here again today. It's always a pleasure to see you. Mrs Marland is a frequent visitor to Welland, because her family is obviously involved very actively in competitive rowing and the old portion of the Welland Canal is a world-class rowing site, which is currently looking to perhaps Tourism and Recreation, the lotteries division, Wintario, for some assistance in developing a sixth rowing lane to make that assured as the site for ongoing international competitions. I'm sure that Ms Marland will be sharing some of the promotion and some of our efforts to get the Ministry of Tourism and Recreation on side with that.

Mrs Marland: If the sitting member for that area would like some letters of support, I would be more than happy to write those. I think you're also being assisted by—is it Donna Powers?

The Chair: Donna Pearson.

Mrs Marland: Pardon me. Donna Pearson.

The Chair: Who's been a real powerhouse—that's why you said what you did—in terms of promoting the rowing facilities there. She has done just an incredible job and I'm very proud of her as a Wellander, but more importantly, as a person who is so concerned about athletes and young people who participate in that activity. So, yes, Ms Marland, I not only want letters of support, I want you there with me.

Mrs Marland: I'll be there with you, and I understand that the local municipal people are already involved.

INCOME MAINTENANCE FOR THE HANDICAPPED CO-ORDINATING GROUP

The Chair: All right. We're ready to resume. The members are back in. Mr Seiler, with the Income Maintenance for the Handicapped Co-ordinating Group, please come forward and have a seat. Please tell us your title, if any, with that group. Tell us what you will. We've got 30 minutes. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for dialogue and questions.

Mr Scott Seiler: Okay. My name is Scott Seiler and I'm the coordinator of the Income Maintenance for the Handicapped Co-ordinating Group. We've been in existence now since 1978. We've taken part in most of the major consultations regarding social assistance reform, the development of the ADP, the assistive devices program, looking at vocational rehabilitation services and many other services and things for people with disabilities regarding income security and employment and other matters. Our membership ranges from the major service providers, such as the CNIB, all the way to BOOST and PUSH, the consumer groups, as well. So it's a very broad-based coalition of organizations and consumer groups. We also do things like budget consultations. I'll be appearing in front of the budget committee near the end of this month as well.

I guess the first thing I would like to talk about is representation. We wholeheartedly agree with the disability steering committee on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board with its recommendations for membership on the governing body, that the councils and the local boards be as proportional and as representational as possible for people with disabilities. Yes, we have two people on the governing body, but we also must remember that business and labour have eight. How fair is that really when you consider that there'll be eight people, or nine people, actually, for the equity-seeking partners as a whole? We're vastly outnumbered as far as our opinions and what we're going to be saying on any committee are concerned.

Also, accessibility is one of our major issues as far as people with disabilities and the programs that already exist and any new programs that might come up are concerned. Access is really measured in three areas: physical access, which means that people can get into a program, both with its systemic and non-systemic parts of the program; the policies and the procedures of getting in should be accommodated; and also the physical part of the training program. For instance, Futures in many areas is completely inaccessible because they're in a basement of a building that doesn't even have an elevator, so how accessible is that program to people with disabilities? It's not accessible at all.

We also believe that accessibility is measured in due process, so people have the same ability to be able to get through the program using any kind of accommodations that might be necessary to get them through that program and adjustments to the program that don't make a significant difference in its effect. Also, in outcomes, we do not believe, and I don't think any person with a disability believes, that if a person goes through a community college program or a retraining program, they should get half a certificate or half a diploma because they've had problems or they've been accommodated in the program. This used to happen where people went through for a four-year program and ended up with a training certificate afterwards instead of a college diploma. This is a disgrace and it has to end. All three of these forms of accommodation must be there and access must be there. If they're not there, then there isn't true access or accommodation.

One of the other things is barriers to access as well. For instance, general welfare assistance, CPP and family benefits can be a barrier to access to training. For instance, in GWA the law does not permit training of people except when the administrator gives the discretion that he would like that to happen, and in these times that isn't happening very often. In CPP it's a categorical thing that you cannot be trained, you cannot do volunteer work, you cannot do anything but sit at home, and that must be changed. The province should take an active role in looking at that and discouraging the federal government from having rules that allow that to happen.

To be declared permanently disabled under the Family Benefits Act, you must be unemployable. Well, the whole gist of unemployability doesn't wash if you're going to have anybody going for retraining. For instance, family benefit workers do not refer people with disabilities to VRS because of that clause in the act that says people are unemployable. How can people get on to these and into these services if they're being blocked by these systemic barriers that are built right into pieces of legislation?

All training programs must be accommodated. All accommodations must be timely. That means that when I need an accommodation as a disabled person, I should not have to wait six months for a service such as vocational rehab or the Workers' Compensation Board to be giving me that accommodation. If I have to wait six months, then any job I might have or be able to get I will not have by the time I get my equipment. This is a ridiculous thing, and I myself am even personally going through this right now. The average startup time is anywhere from two to five months for vocational rehab and even more in some areas. We have a real problem with this lag time it takes to get assistance in a training program or to get people out to work. This must be dealt with, and it must be dealt with by OTAB and it must be dealt with with the other systems that do training, which will be brought into an OTAB system.

All costs must be covered by either government or by the employers. The Human Rights Commission has done extensive work in accommodations and guidelines to accommodations. Let's use them. If we use these accommodation guidelines, maybe we can cut some of the extraordinary costs of these things, because employers will

be picking up a little bit more of the costs for accommodations. I don't think it should be 100% government, nor should it be 100% employers; I think it has to be a shared thing to bring people into the employment stream and into training as well.

I guess my last topic is accountability. Training and any kind of training system must be accountable to its clients, the government agencies and organizations and the ministries that provide funding and are in charge of the administration of the different acts. They must be accountable to them. Also, I think one thing that training has to be more accountable to is the general public as a whole. People out there in Ontario don't understand the mishmash of employment programs, they don't understand all the gaps in employment programs and they don't understand even where you can start to look for the different programs, so we need to work a lot in those areas as well.

1100

Accountability is measured in outcomes, more than clients going through a system. We can put 50 clients through a system, but if all 50 still don't have a job after the first six months, then the program was useless, and we must be looking at these things.

For instance, I heard a horror story about two years ago around the North Bay area where hundreds and hundreds of people had been trained to be meat cutters. North Bay has absolutely no shortage of meat cutters, because there's at least 500 of them up there. This was all done by a training program put on by the federal government. But they don't think about, what are they going to do with all these meat cutters in a specific area? It's nice if you can move them all over the province and spread them out and you have a central place where you train meat cutters, if that's what you're going to do, but it doesn't do any good to flood the market in a particular area with a particular type of employment just to say you've done training.

Mr Jim Wiseman (Durham West): There's not that many cows up there.

Mr Seiler: Also, I think accountability has to be done in a timely way as well. That means that if there's been a problem, you can't wait five years to solve it, you have to do it now. There have to be things built into any act or any system of training that can deal with these types of issues in a very immediate way and a way that's going to help the person who has the problem, not 10 people down the line from that person, because this doesn't help, and all that's happening now is that many people are being discouraged from taking any form of training whatsoever.

Thank you very much for the time.

Mrs Marland: First of all, Mr Seiler, let me say, as the spokesperson for the Progressive Conservative caucus, that I'm very happy that you're here this morning. As the spokesperson for people with disabilities for our caucus, I think you bring a very important direction for this committee to be considering while it is reviewing Bill 96.

You did refer at the beginning of your comments to the fact that there were two representatives on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board for people with disabilities. I think in my reading of the bill it says one director.

If you're thinking the way I am, I'm hoping and assuming that, out of the other 21 board members, there might be more than one person with a different disability perhaps than the one person who is selected to represent people with disabilities. In other words, we may have two or three with different types of disabilities who might be on the board, but as far as the actual wording in the legislation goes, I think it really only addresses one to be defined in that category.

Mr Seiler: One and an alternate.

Mrs Marland: Oh, you're counting the alternate?

Mr Seiler: Yes.

Mrs Marland: Okay, that's fine, but as a full-time member it's one, isn't it?

Mr Seiler: Yes.

Mrs Marland: Your comments about the general welfare and the Canadian pension I think are terribly important comments. This is what is wrong with the system today, and it won't improve with OTAB unless we change the policies under these two funding systems, and that's what you're addressing.

One of the best examples I can give about a personal experience I had in my constituency with someone who had CPP and disability pension is a gentleman who actually is without legs. He is an incredibly brilliant man, working on small engines, and every time he has any income at all from his small business repairing small engines and motors, he loses. His income, as you know, is deducted from his disability pension, and I always find this unbelievable. I think it's got to be the grossest example of unfairness and injustice at any level of government. Because of the fact that he is earning some income and keeping himself busy in his mind and his hands occupied and he's meeting this challenge on a daily basis and making a very big success of it doesn't mean that his disability goes away. It just means that he has a business and he has something worthwhile in his life, and in his particular case I've always felt that was a terrible example of what's wrong with the present system.

When you addressed this morning the fact that vocational rehabilitational services are not always available to people with disabilities, therefore people with disabilities sometimes are not as employable, and I agree with you, the fact is that if people with disabilities can access the vocational rehabilitation services, then they do become more employable and it gives them an option.

I wanted to ask you, when you talk about the areas of elimination of systemic barriers that impede access, I guess if there is one area that we are fighting for all the time on behalf of people with all kinds of disabilities, in all category of disabilities, both those we can see and those we can't see—and I think as an example I want to give the fact that people with developmental disabilities over the age of 21 now no longer have sheltered workshops in this province since the current NDP government has cut the funding for those programs—when you are talking about systemic barriers—

The Chair: Do you want to respond to that, sir? Ms Marland, it's been seven minutes.

Mrs Marland: Well, it must have been good.

The Chair: I like you a whole lot and you ask good questions when you ask them, but please, move along.

Mrs Marland: Do you feel that the systemic barriers that impede access are the biggest problem for us to overcome before we can resolve anything through a vehicle like the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board?

Mr Seiler: I think that unless the systemic barriers are removed, no program or act will make a difference, and the systemic barriers reach very, very deep. They reach into government policies and practices, they reach into private training practices, they reach into funding practices, they reach all areas of employment services and they're rampant through all of them. The underrepresentation of people on the different boards and committees and things that help to govern these different training schemes really shows, I think, a lack of any real initiative to look at these systemic barriers, and I say that because if we're there to be able to point the barriers out in a credible way that can create solutions, which we are ready to do, I think you can get rid of the barriers in a very short amount of time. But unless you involve us in a very concrete way, you're not going to ever get rid of the barriers.

1110

Mr Huget: Thank you for your presentation. You certainly raised some very important issues.

Yesterday a witness before the committee by the name of Catherine Miller from Peterborough appeared before the committee and related her experience in terms of trying to take a university course that ran from September till April. I think her experience is interesting, because her disability required the textbooks to be taped and she didn't receive any books until December. She also required a device to help her communicate and that wasn't received till March and the course was over in April. You really have to shake your head and wonder how these things happen.

Mr Seiler: It's typical.

Mr Huget: That's my question to you. How typical is it, first of all?

Mr Seiler: It's 100%.

Mr Huget: I think there's a very important role to play in here terms of being involved in the decision-making process. Those types of issues must be brought to the forefront and dealt with, because if it wasn't so sad, it would be laughable to suggest for a minute that under the current system our society is encouraging people to acquire skills when running courses like that with no equipment and no assistance and expecting people to achieve something. It's ridiculous. I think your voice has to be much stronger, and I'm glad to see that OTAB allows for that, but I'd like some of your views in terms of how typical that problem is.

Mr Seiler: That problem is so typical that that's one of the reasons why you're looking at an 80% or 90% unemployment rate around people with disabilities, and the more need the person has, the more likely the problem will exist. For instance, five or six years ago I was put into a

situation where I could not get equipment because I was in school and VRS didn't give equipment to people who were in school. So I got out to work and then VRS said, "Well, you're not doing the right kind of work to get equipment, so we're not going to give it to you now either."

At the same time, a program like that has the discretion to do what the hell it wants, and that's the sad part about it. There's no willingness to do even what they're mandated to do in the acts that exist. There's discretion to do all these things in most of these acts, but they don't go by the discretion that they have. They're afraid to say, "We're going to spend a little money." Well, you're going to spend a lot of money keeping people on social assistance and CPP and welfare. You're going to spend a lot more money on that.

The Chair: You'll be brief, Mr Wilson, please?

Mr Gary Wilson: Just because I want to continue on that and to see what you see as a problem. After all, we've had a lot of representatives and some presenters here telling us that there's such a huge waste in this kind of arrangement, so why does it continue?

I want to go back to representation. As has been pointed out, there is a representative, a director, from people with disabilities, as well as the alternate. But beyond that, there's a public interest that's going to be represented by the directors. That has to be taken into account in the nominations and in the appointment process.

You've pointed to the waste in economic and social justice terms here, so why does it continue. Don't you think this kind of representation will lead to the removal of these barriers?

Mr Seiler: How much power do you think you would have against 16 people who have only their self-interest at heart, and that's business and labour.

Mr Gary Wilson: If you mean the board of directors, as I pointed out to you, they are appointed to this board with the public interest in view, primarily.

Mr Seiler: I have a hard time believing that anybody gets above that public interest, gets to that point—

Mr Gary Wilson: Would you include yourself in that?

The Chair: One moment, Mr Wilson, let him finish.

Mr Seiler: Yes, and I think the disabled community is just as guilty as everybody else with that. I think we have to be honest with ourselves and say that yes, we all go with the interests that are best for us. That is what this is, that is what all things are, when everybody who comes in here and presents is doing that. And to assume that we are the only ones who do that or that business is the only ones that do that is a wrong assumption, and it's a bad assumption to make, because we are all in that same boat. We're all asking for things that are within our own interests. Yes, we do talk about the broader public interest, but most of the time what we are centred in on are our own specific interests.

With one person, or even four people, if you count all the partners, you're not going to get any real—you know, how can we have a say in something where we're

outnumbered 16 to one? How can we have a fair vote or a fair say in that when we're outnumbered to that point?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think this is based on the idea that we can go beyond our narrow self-interest. It has to work that way. The provincial government works on that basis, that we take into account what representatives are saying about their particular situations, and you've raised it from the conditions that affect people with disabilities. As I say, there's a lot of agreement that's a dreadful circumstance, and we're looking for ways to move beyond it. How we've gotten into that situation is one thing, but one of the ways we move beyond it is by recognizing the waste in both human and economic terms. As I say, I think everyone's who's going to be appointed to this board will recognize that.

Mr Seiler: Well, we hope.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. And I think with spokespeople like you, that will always be front and centre.

Mr Seiler: Thank you.

The Chair: If you want the final word, Mr Wilson, I'm prepared to let you have it, or we can move on to Mr Offer.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): Thank you for your presentation. I think you've well outlined some of the many problems that are existent in training and education and equipping people to meet the needs of the economy and the demands of the economy.

But I must say I was listening very carefully. In your discussions with Mr Wilson, I think it came out quite clearly that, though you are well aware of some of the frailties in some of the training programs, when you take a look at the board, as you've indicated more than once, you are one voice in 16 persons. I hear a concern from yourself that this structure might not be one which will give you a genuine assurance that when you make these points, they will be not only listened to but dealt with. I'm wondering if you could share that with us.

Mr Seiler: I think I came to that conclusion because the OTAB people went around the province and did hearings across the province and I think this is a prime example of what happens with people with disabilities. There was one person on the panel, and because there was very little focus on disability or even the rest of the equity-seeking partners and the problems they face, which are not too much unlike people with disabilities, we had to have a special meeting in Toronto to address those issues because those issues were not addressed.

I went to the hearing in Mississauga, and that hearing was packed full with people who had a self-interest in it, people who were from the UI offices asking to plead for their jobs. These are the people we have to face. These are the guys we have to deal with. How can we, as a group of individuals with as little power as we really have economically and fiscally and all the other things that people who have power have—we don't have that power. We have a voice, and we can yell loud and we can embarrass sometimes, but we don't have huge power, not to be able to influence that.

If you get put on a panel of eight people, or 10 people, or 20 or 40, you're one voice. That means you have to find

partnerships with other people, which with all the competing interests here is not going to be very easy.

1120

Mr Offer: But you've highlighted a fundamental flaw of the board right now. You've just brought it out. It's clear as anyone could ever imagine, and that is the lack of accountability that potentially exists between the agency, the board and the government.

It is without doubt that the heart and soul of this is the hiving off of training and the responsibilities within ministries to this board. What happens if you or others are not satisfied with the direction this board takes? Who is it that you can complain to? The minister has cut the cord between the board and government. Who do you complain to?

Mr Seiler: We will not have a recourse if that is the case. We will be able to complain to our person who is on the board, and the person who is being proposed to be on the board is an excellent representative of people with disabilities, probably the best person who could possibly be that representative, but it's only one voice.

How you structure the voting procedures in these groups is another problem you're going to face. If you have voting by consensus, there's going to be big trouble. You're never going to get anywhere, because no one in that room is going to be able to agree on anything. I can foresee that happening very, very quickly. In fact, they're not even going to be able to agree on an agenda.

Mrs Marland: What kind of voting would you want?

The Chair: Sir, I want to thank you kindly on behalf of the committee for some very insightful comments. We're grateful to you for taking the time and coming here to Queen's Park. You've been a very effective spokesperson on behalf of the Income Maintenance for the Handicapped Co-ordinating Group. Please let your membership know we are grateful and thankful to you and them for their interest and their participation. Thank you kindly, sir. Please keep in touch.

Mr Seiler: Thank you very much, Mr Kormos.

The Chair: Take care.

Mr Huget: Mr Chairman, I just have a request for legislative research.

The Chair: Yes, sir.

Mr Huget: Yesterday it was mentioned, and I think we can refer to Catherine Miller's testimony—

The Chair: While you're making that request, perhaps the people speaking on behalf of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association would come on up and take a seat. Go ahead, Mr Huget.

Mr Huget: Catherine Miller's testimony referred to the taping of textbooks and that it didn't take place for a number of months, as well as the provision of an assistive writing device. It was referred to in her testimony before the committee that there were no companies in Canada that would do the taping. I would ask legislative research to check that out and confirm it, because I believe that there is a role for Canada, if not indeed the Ontario government, to make sure that those kind of services are within our borders and not in another country's borders.

I would also like to get legislative research to look into the fact that it appears from the testimony these assistive devices are consistently late in arriving. I'd like some indication of the circumstances from the ministries involved and their perspectives.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Huget. Those are very important points.

CANADIAN MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATION

The Chair: Please, people, tell us your names, your positions. We've got 30 minutes. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for questions and dialogue.

Ms Janis Wade: Good morning. My name is Janis Wade. I'm the vice-president of human resources at CCL Industries Inc and I also chair the human resources committee at the Canadian Manufacturers' Association.

Mr John Howatson: I'm John Howatson, the director of human resources for the CMA.

Ms Wade: I'll start off this morning and then pass things over to John.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association got involved early in the process. We saw the initial idea for OTAB come out of Premier Peterson's advisory council in 1990 and prepared a position document for our Ontario board of directors. With the election of the NDP, we set up an early meeting with the former Minister of Skills Development and Minister of Colleges and Universities, Richard Allen. We wanted to review CMA's training and education policy paper, which had been issued earlier that year. We also discussed his government's initial thoughts on the introduction of OTAB. He asked us to participate in a study that several ministries were jointly conducting. CMA provided that group with the results of a survey performed on members of our human resources committee and also highlighted items from our training paper.

Let me quickly go through some of those highlights so you can see where CMA stands in relation to OTAB and training.

From the mission statement of our training paper, I think two key paragraphs stand out. The first one reads:

"The skills and adaptability of the workforce are a crucial factor in gaining and maintaining competitive advantage. First-rate education systems and training programs working together produce people with creativity, vision, compassion, understanding and skill, the human capital components of national wealth and success."

The second paragraph states:

"We must expand our investment in people and the systems that educate, train and upgrade them. We must also, where necessary, realign, change and improve our education delivery system."

In that paper there were 17 recommendations which were directed to our own membership, covering 10 different subject areas. The following are some of the highlights:

(1) The development of a training culture that is proactive and continuous.

(2) The improvement of the image of technical, vocational, scientific and engineering vocations. It was felt more had to be done to promote education and career

choices in these areas and there was also a need for a strong apprenticeship and traineeship program with national standards.

(3) The development of a program and methods to systematically record all activities and costs related to training within individual companies.

(4) On an industry-wide basis, target 1% of payroll for training purposes in the manufacturing sector.

Just to expand on that issue, at our 121st annual general meeting in June of last year, the results of a member survey were presented. Training was one of the topics of this survey. The results regarding the training are as follows:

Looking at the average amount spent, the largest proportion of respondents, 40%, indicate that they spend more than 2% of payroll on training. Another 29% spend between 1% and 2%, and 31% spend less than 1% of payroll on training.

As far as the expenditure trends are concerned, 60% of respondents plan to increase their training budget in 1992 compared to 1991 and 47% anticipate a further increase in training expenditures in 1993, which is usually an area that is cut during tough economic times but not so in this case.

(5) Government funds to be used to lever an increasing amount of private sector training dollars to provide training that is cost-effective, measurable, customer-focused and appropriate.

(6) More involvement by the private sector in the formation of government training programs.

(7) More participation by manufacturers in sectoral and community training groups.

(8) Involvement by manufacturers in coop programs, student apprenticeship programs and Skills Canada programs.

(9) With only 30% of high school students going on to post-secondary education, there needed to be more school-to-work transition courses to give students certifiable and marketable skills.

More recently, CMA developed a vision document or strategic plan for Canadian manufacturing of the future. It was entitled *The Aggressive Economy—Competing to Win* and it outlined what manufacturers must do and what governments must do to survive, to grow and to win. *The Aggressive Economy* rests on four pillars: a self-help attitude based on total quality management, a highly skilled workforce, effective application of new technology and a public policy environment that promotes competitive performance.

I would also like to put manufacturing in the context of the Canadian economy. Manufacturing directly represents 17% of the economy of Canada, but its indirect contribution far outstrips that of any other sector. It creates demand for goods and services and resources. It is a major source of fixed capital investment and makes substantial and significant contributions to public sector revenues. In all, manufacturing drives over 52% of total economic activity in Canada. Therefore, a strong Canadian economy is based on the realization that wealth creation and future economic prosperity depend primarily on a successful manufacturing sector. Focusing on upgrading the skills and ability of that manufacturing workforce will immediately address some of our employment concerns.

As you can see, CMA is an organization that is very much involved and committed to training.

I'm going to turn it over to John. John has been very much involved in the OTAB area and he'll deal with some of the more specific areas relating to the bill.

1130

Mr Howatson: Prior to getting into my presentation, I want to bring up something I believe has been brought up earlier this week. This is to register a concern that the new Minister of Education and Training, David Cooke, has stated there will be no amendments to the bill. I would therefore ask why we're proceeding with this consultation process if the ideas from the 140 or so groups that have already come before you will have no impact on the outcome. I hope we can perhaps address that during the question and answer period.

When the minister released his discussion document in November 1991, it was determined by CMA and several other business associations to form a steering group to input into the discussion document and to input into the formation of OTAB itself.

As we stated earlier, we have worked together over the last 13 months to develop a common business position on OTAB. This position was presented to this committee on January 28. It focused on a few key areas that should be addressed in the legislation. My job today is to support these points and to bring out additional points that are of importance to CMA members.

Let me just quickly review the main points from the business steering committee presentation.

(1) Bill 96 has strayed far from the original intent of OTAB, that is, to address the need for competitiveness. An additional clause is required in the purpose section which would read, "to recognize the need for a competitive Ontario workforce that would form the basis for wealth and job creation."

(2) Training for training's sake is something to be avoided at all costs. Training should be focused on the needs of the customer: the employer, the employee and potential employees. Therefore the word "appropriate" should be added in front of all references to "labour force development programs and services" in the purpose and objects sections of the act.

(3) OTAB started out to be a very focused concept, which in turn made the chance for concerted action and quick success possible. However, over time the focus enlarged to the point that OTAB is unrealistically trying to be all things to all people. This shows up most dramatically in the purpose and objects sections where it refers to "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers." This phrase should either be removed or qualified by adding the words "by helping them identify and pursue realistic and personal development and economic goals."

The additional points that CMA wishes to highlight for this standing committee are as follows:

(1) In paragraph 4(1)16, the wording implies that OTAB will direct its funding almost exclusively to publicly funded education systems. This almost negates the previous paragraph, 4(1)15, which indicates that OTAB will

make effective use of all of Ontario's diverse educational and training sources. Our members have told us in a major survey we conducted that they, along with their employees, must be able to choose the provider of training based on a number of factors including, obviously, ease of access, expertise, quality, availability, cost etc. Therefore we recommend that the wording in 4(1)16 should be changed to read, "To build on the strengths of Ontario's publicly funded education systems."

(2) The CMA appreciates that the upgrading of skills in the broader public sector will eventually be part of OTAB. However, there needs to be an initial focus on the private sector to ensure the goals of wealth generation and job creation are met. This would require an addition to 4(1)1 which would read, "with the initial focus on the private sector." Our definition of "initial focus" would be approximately five years.

(3) All seven steering committee chairs agreed in their discussion on the OTAB mandate that there was a need for empowered local boards. At this point, it has been left to regulation to ensure that this concept is actually established. This is a critical matter and should appear in the legislation. Top-down structures are not the answer. The need is for a bottom-up structure that understands the requirements of the community. Language to that effect should appear in the legislation in the objects section and would read as follows:

"To establish a coordinated network of empowered local boards that will have the authority to identify and address local labour force development needs and funding requirements. Functions will be performed within a strategic and accountability framework established by the governing body."

Finally, there are three items that may not be able to be included in the legislation but should be known to the members of the standing committee.

(1) OTAB should represent an opportunity to rationalize existing structures, programs and staff and to achieve a clear focus, mission and strategic approach to the training challenge facing Ontario's organizations.

(2) No new organizations should be created if they currently exist in a somewhat different format than contemplated by OTAB, for example, the Ontario skills development offices, the Ontario Training Corp, and its potential to form the learning network, and community industrial training committees.

(3) OTAB is to be set up as a schedule 4 agency, one that we believe operates at arm's length from government. To date, the business community has seen the heavy hand of government become involved when matters were not going in the direction that government required. If this is to be the fate that will befall the governing body, then OTAB will never reach its potential or, worse, will fail. I don't think that's what the people of Ontario want.

Thank you for your attention.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much for your presentation. It certainly covers the issues that OTAB has been set out to deal with in a number of ways.

First of all, though, I'd like to refer to something that is unsubstantiated, which is the intention of the minister, the new minister, David Cooke, that there'll be no amendments. There's nothing to show where you got that. You did say I think in passing that it was mentioned here in the committee—

Mr Ramsay: Where?

Mr Gary Wilson: —but that has never been raised with Mr Cooke. There was reference, I think, to the deputy minister making that contention, but even that was not substantiated.

Again, the purpose of the committee is to hear from groups like yours with a view to addressing the legislation, and certainly I'm pleased to see that you've gone on to make some solid points about what the legislation is.

I'd like to ask you about one thing, partly because you were in the committee room when the presentation before yours was made, and this is a theme that has developed over the hearings, which is the representation on the OTAB board of directors and how representative that committee can be as far as reaching the goals you identify in your brief, that is, to have a well-trained, competitive workforce and still achieve goals of what we've considered to be a decent society.

There's some contention that some of the representatives on there will have only in mind what is termed a "competitive economy" without any regard to what that means for our citizens. At least, the representatives of some of these groups are saying that they're going to be shut out of the issues that affect them, and when you look at the issues that affect them, it turns out that they are very much related to economic issues and that there's a huge waste in economic terms. Mr Huget mentioned one of these earlier about just the unavailability of equipment to help people become effective participants in education or in the economy and the waste in human lives, the frustration that this amounts to, which is of course a direct economic loss in that people have to be supported somehow and the province then becomes the supporter of last resort where these people could be active participants in the economy. I was just wondering what your response to that concern is, that the directors can only be responsive to and perhaps consider their own narrow sector or self-interest.

1140

Mr Howatson: Let me just make some comments on the first thing you said. You said it's not substantiated. I was at the meeting where the deputy minister flat out said, "No amendments," and when questioned said: "Well, I didn't quite mean that. I mean, if there were substantial recommendations that made sense, then we would consider it." But it wasn't until prodded that those remarks were made. He indicated, "I've just come from a meeting with the minister," and the minister had told him that he wanted the OTAB thing pushed through as quickly as possible, it was an important initiative—no disagreement there—but that he felt that having amendments would delay that process.

On your second point, on the equity issue, I think the issues will be addressed, because one of the agreements we have made with the OTAB project folks is that the business group of eight will take into account the face of

Ontario and we plan to do so when we assemble that team together. Not only will we have the views of the equity groups sort of as the other chairs, but we'll have people in those positions within our own body as well.

We quite agree with you that we should be tapping into as many sources of talent as we can, but I'm saying we've got to get our economy going, because unless you have jobs, there's nothing you can give anybody. That's why we keep saying, let's address competitiveness. I know that's a dirty word for some, but to me, if we can create businesses that are growing, then we can accommodate as many people as we can.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. I think it's right on. It really describes the revolution that has to happen in the Ontario economy in order to rebuild the Ontario economy and I really like the very hard-hitting and strong language you use in your recommendations from the mission statement of your training paper. I think it's right and I wish the drafters of the OTAB legislation, or their political masters anyway, had really taken this into account, because you really describe what has to happen in Ontario, and it really is nothing short of a revolution, and what we get, as you know, from the purpose clauses is a bunch of namby-pamby crap. That's what's here. It's nothing more, nothing less. It is a bunch of crap. It promises everything to everybody, but it doesn't address the hard-hitting issue that we have to have a revolution in the economy here, and training has got to be I guess the first wave of that revolution that has to happen to our people. You're right on.

I quite frankly am shocked to hear that, after probably spending—and I'm not sure what the budget is of this committee, but with the television services, the translation services and all the expenses, the civil servants who are here and other officers of the Legislature, I would say we spend easily \$50,000 a week to support a democratic process that I thoroughly believe in, listening to people, such as you, individuals, other organizations, the unions that came before us, all having ideas, offering suggestions as to how we could improve this.

Mr Gary Wilson: Do you have a question?

Mr Ramsay: I can't believe, after listening to all those people, with some great ideas, there would not be an amendment coming from the government.

I can speak for our caucus. I have been preparing amendments, and I didn't prepare one amendment before I heard what I heard from people here, but all my amendments are based on what I heard from various groups that I've heard in the last few weeks. They're all based on that. I think they're very good suggestions and I would hope that the government members—and we'll see next week—will be open. We're certainly going to discuss them. I certainly hope they engage in discussion and would be open to some of those. There's nothing there that changes the whole concept of OTAB. It needs amendments. We'll support this legislation but offer some changes, and I'm just saddened by that.

I just want to say to you that I have listened to your recommendations and that, of the amendments I have already prepared, I have incorporated many of the ideas you bring forward today. I thank you very much for coming.

I think it is worthwhile that you come here. I'd like to defer to my colleague Mr Offer.

The Chair: You have one and one half minutes.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I agree with my colleague Mr Ramsay. I think your presentation just is bang on.

But I want to talk about one aspect of your presentation which we've raised a number of times, and that talks about this thing called the new schedule for agency. It is curious. This is a new agency. When one takes a look at how these agencies are supposed to get their money—and we have the documents from Management Board to prove this—it is by revenue generated from their own program. An example would be, for instance, Ontario Hydro.

My question to you is, I believe that this is the forerunner to an employers' levy. I believe that this is going to allow that to come forward. You've spoken, as a schedule 4 agency—

The Chair: He's asked to respond, Mr Offer.

Mr Offer: Could you give me your thoughts as to your position on the schedule 4 agency and on an employers' levy for training?

Mr Howatson: We looked at schedule 4 as strictly an organization that was set up in two parts, one, the governing body would operate at arm's length, but the "4" part meant that also there would be staff who were civil servants, and that's why it was created as schedule 4. We're very much keen that the governing body does operate at arm's length. We do think there may be possibilities for OTAB to be a money-generating body, but that may come through investments and other things like that.

As for a training levy or tax, that's obviously something we surveyed our members on, and 95% of them categorically said, "No, thank you." We think a voluntary approach to upgrading training is the thing to do, and I think the national training survey that was released just a couple of days ago indicating that manufacturing is one of the groups that sort of has addressed that—we are in the firing line when it comes to competitiveness and fighting off the global competition, and training is the only thing that keeps us viable and progressing.

Mr Carr: I agree with my Liberal friends in that the presentation is very good. There are some very valid points in there. I appreciate you coming and sharing them with us.

I guess the good news is that after the next election, this government won't be around. Do you see this structure being put in place now being able to be changed regardless of what government takes over next time? Can you see it being changed, once this government is tossed out, to be made to be workable? If so, how would you see the changes that need to be made so that we can make this thing work?

Mr Howatson: I don't think we have time.

Mr Carr: The major points, let's say.

Mr Howatson: I was just going to say I think the people who get appointed to the governing body will be key in that. I heard the presentation from the gentleman who preceded us, and I certainly hope that the baggage is left at the door when OTAB is formed, because if the governing

body does do that, then it will just, as he said, flounder. Our people are going in there with the concept of what's good for Ontario and that we should forget about our own self-interest and develop programs that will benefit all.

Mr Carr: Good. I agree that people are the key, and when this government doesn't get to appoint them, I think we will be in a much better position.

Having said that, I want to go to a more long-term question. Regardless of whether you dislike OTAB, as many people do, long-term, people realize we need to have better skills and training. The big question that needs to be asked, though, is training for what? You may have heard a presenter come in before and talk about training for meat cutters up in North Bay and then there weren't any positions.

Your association is looking at the long-term needs, and I know it's difficult to narrow it down, but if you were to say to this committee, "These are the types of skills we need to be able to compete in the global economy," using the phrase of the report, what would they be? Maybe you could give us a little bit of insight on some of the skills that you think we're going to need going into the next century.

Mr Howatson: Again, I can only come from a broad perspective. Perhaps Jan can add some specifics for her industry. Our manufacturing sector is made up of over 30 different sectors in itself, but we emphasize the technical, vocational, engineering and scientific skills as the areas we see people should concentrate their education and future training on because those are where we're going to make the difference. Specifically, as I said, each individual company and each individual sector has its own requirements, so, as I said, I can only give you the broad-brush sort of thing.

Ms Wade: Just to add to that, as John has said, it's very specific, depending on the industry or the company. Also areas that need to be improved and can be done through the education system are literacy and numeracy skills, which various manufacturing companies are facing in trying to upgrade their workers, and also just the whole area of quality improvement, continuous improvement, teamwork and decision-making so that workers can be more empowered and have more of a say.

1150

Mr Carr: Another question I have relates to the private sector trainers. As you know, with the amount of training that needs to be done, we're not going to be able to do it unless we have private sector trainers involved, because as you mentioned, the amount of training we need and the kinds of training we need are just too numerous for one board to say, "This is what we're going to do." This government doesn't believe in that, but the next government, whoever it will be, I believe will. I shouldn't speak for the Liberals, but I think they've made that very clear.

How do we bring the private sector trainers back in once this OTAB gets set up? How do you see us doing it, and can we do it, if there's any still around by that time?

Mr Howatson: I hope they're not being excluded. One of the things we have in the legislation is—I think it's in 4(1)15. I can't remember the number, but 4(1) does say the use of all Ontario's education resources. When we were negotiating the mandate with the six other steering

groups, everyone sort of agreed to use specific terms, like "private trainer," "universities," "community trainers" and stuff like that. We were convinced that sort of a much broader wording would be beneficial. So we bought into that, but the whole intent behind that paragraph was that private trainers would be a key component of OTAB and that we're not to be shut out of the process.

The Chair: Thank you to you, Mr Howatson, and to you, Ms Wade, for a very effective presentation. You've played an important role in the committee's process. We're grateful to you and I trust you'll be keeping in touch if you have more things to say or other views to present to us.

Ms Wade: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you kindly. Take care.

SUDBURY AND DISTRICT CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

The Chair: The next participant is the Sudbury and District Chamber of Commerce. Please come forward, whoever the spokespersons are, however many, have a seat, tell us your name, sir, your position and proceed to tell us what you will.

Mr Mike McNaughton: I'm Mike McNaughton, a member of the education program of the Sudbury and District Chamber of Commerce. We welcome the opportunity to participate in the important consultative process on Bill 96 undertaken by this committee.

The Sudbury and District Chamber of Commerce, now in its 97th year of leading and servicing the Sudbury area business community, represents over 800 businesses throughout the regional municipality of Sudbury. My presentation deals with concerns expressed by many other groups and organizations. It is our hope that if this is heard often enough, positive change will take place and the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, OTAB, will truly reflect the needs of all. I wish to address four areas of concern, the first being representation.

The community industrial training committees, CITCs, have been open to a very broad representation including labour and social action groups and indeed some committees have representation from a variety of these groups. The terms of reference under which CITCs operate are very tight and did not meet the individual needs of labour or social action groups, a point that seems to be the focus of the necessity for change.

The recommended Ontario Training and Adjustment Board structure of eight labour, eight business, one women's representative, one racial minority, one person with disabilities, one francophone and two educator-trainer representatives creates the possibility of improved representation but has a serious flaw. The eight labour positions have been designated as seven to the Ontario Federation of Labour, the OFL, an organization representing less than 20% of private sector employees, appointed to speak for 87.5% of the entire workforce. If the true intention is that labour have an equal authority, why is the OFL designated without allowing the majority to have a voice in determining their needs?

By the nature of their organization, the labour representatives will be members employed by the OFL and able to devote full-time hours to any OTAB activities. With the

business partners coming from a more diverse and representative background and mostly still involved in the survival of their businesses, the ability to have an equal voice will be hampered by the availability of these volunteers to take the time required away from their businesses to stay on the same informed level as their labour partners. Were the labour representatives from a broader range of the workforce, not only would the representation reflect a more reasonable number of employees, it would require them to look beyond the needs of the OFL. While most of the labour representatives would probably be employed full-time dealing with OTAB issues, the advantage created by the existing designation would be slightly reduced.

The second issue deals with timing and the possible interruption of necessary training during a time when training is such an urgent need for the future of our ability to compete in the global economy and environment. Why are we destroying an existing infrastructure and extremely well-qualified and dedicated employee base that has been successful for many years when we could enhance it with a few simple changes that would accomplish the end result of a more representative training system without the interruptions that are likely to result from this cumbersome process?

The third concern is with cost. To date, we have seen no estimates of the cost of establishing and operating this new structure, but it is sure to be more expensive than the existing volunteer-based system. It is suggested that consolidating programs, services and ministries will save vast amounts. This could be accomplished without rebuilding the entire concept and the savings put to use training for the future of our economy.

Finally, we are concerned that the requirement of true representation from northern Ontario has been ignored, beginning with the business steering committee that has no northern representation. It is an absolute necessity that we have at least one representative from northeastern and one from northwestern Ontario as business members of the OTAB.

To date, the consultation process has resulted in little change. It is time to start listening to the other partners and implement some meaningful changes that will allow this initiative to proceed successfully.

The Vice-Chair (Mr Bob Huget): Thank you very much. Mr Ramsay and Mr Offer.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for making your presentation today. As a person who lives slightly north of you in Timiskaming, I certainly welcome you to Toronto, Mike, and enjoyed your presentation very much. I think you've highlighted some of the main flaws of this legislation for sure.

I'm glad you brought up the first point that you did, that what OTAB is going to do in the establishment of the local boards, the LTABs, is really throw the baby out with the bathwater in that these community industrial training committees the federal government had set up in most cases are working. The problem is that, because they were a creature of the federal government, some unions in some areas did not take part, unfortunately, and therefore don't think they're effective and they've come to the provincial

government for another model. So the OFL has presented a model that is suitable to it, and that's the model the provincial government is following.

I'm very concerned about the establishments of these local boards, because in some communities where the CITCs are working well, we should not be destroying the good work and the partnerships that have developed over the years there. I'm very concerned that we're going to apply this model, this stamp, if you will, imprinted upon all the communities of Ontario and it's a stamp that has been created at Queen's Park. It's something we've been known to do down here as provincial governments, to have a great idea at Queen's Park and say this is great for every community in Ontario. The time is over where I think we can start to impose models that maybe work well for urban centres or southern Ontario on the north and imprint them everywhere. There's got to be flexibility. I was wondering if you'd have an idea of how as we develop the local boards we can integrate the work and the people who are on the CITCs with the new board that I guess will have to be formed with this legislation.

Mr McNaughton: As my presentation suggests, I have a concern for the staff people. I think there's a very valuable and experienced resource there that should be utilized. That would be certainly one step. The second would be that they could use the existing structure and perhaps mandate the membership so everyone is involved.

Mr Ramsay: That's a good idea. I will be bringing forward some amendments that speak to some of that, because there's nothing that speaks in this legislation to the establishment of the LTABs. In fact it's only permissive legislation in that the OTAB may establish these local boards. It's not spelled out. From my point of view, I'd rather see organizations start from the ground up, like the CITCs did, without a big umbrella organization. Unfortunately we have here a top-down organization.

I'm going to defer to my colleague. Steven Offer would like to ask a question.

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Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. I'd like to focus in on the LTABs, the local boards. Briefly I would like to ask from you, as someone who has significant experience, is the strength of any training or retraining program going to be dependent on whether it's from the local communities?

Mr McNaughton: I believe it's entirely dependent on that.

Mr Offer: Do you not believe that if we are looking at a structure such as this in this bill, we should have the mandatory establishment of local boards in the legislation?

Mr McNaughton: I'm not sure I can answer that question because there are so many other questions that go right with it. I'm a little uncomfortable trying to answer that question.

Mr Offer: I guess the concern that I have is really based on what your position is, that the strength of any training or adjustment program is going to be as much the reflection it will take from the local community and, if we are really going to be dealing with this matter, we have to

ensure to the communities in this province that there will be local boards created, not at the whim of the agency, but rather right in the legislation. I'm wondering if you might want to comment on that aspect.

Mr McNaughton: I think the issue of local boards has created a lot of problems in itself in that under the suggested model there are I believe 23 designed to replace 57 existing CITCs, so there are a number of communities that are feeling very left out. If that was to be mandated as part of the OTAB structure, then I think it really needs to be seriously looked at before that happens.

Mr Offer: I appreciate that response. Dealing with the issue of funding, because you brought forward the cost, in the very early few days of this hearing we heard that this type of structure would be in the area of \$400 million or \$500 million. That sounds more like the startup than anything, and I imagine it causes a great deal of concern to a lot of people, but how do you believe training and adjustment programs should be funded in this province? Should they come from the private sector or should they be the responsibility of governments?

Mr McNaughton: I believe it is the ultimate responsibility of the private sector, but I don't think the appropriate way to do that is to reduce the government funding by the substantial amounts that seem to be taking place now and shock the private sector into having to deliver the training. I believe there are probably much easier ways to accomplish that. Any number of things could happen, and I'm sure that if the private sector was asked, it would be happy to respond.

Mr Offer: I think we received—at least I received and members of the committee received yesterday—some news report of a recent research program that had gone on which indicated basically how much the private sector was contributing in a variety of ways to training programs around the country.

I'd like to thank you very much for your presentation and your response to the questions. I believe they have provided some real help in dealing with this proposed agency.

Mr McNaughton: If I may, I'd just like to comment about the news report. I would question the figures that were used in that. I don't recall the numbers, but I think there's a lot of private sector training that takes place that's not reported in such things.

Mr Offer: Thank you.

The Chair: I do want you to note, sir, that Ron Hansen is visiting us, as he's entitled to do under the standing orders. This is a democratic committee. I recognize those standing orders. I invite him to participate in this debate. I wouldn't think of not giving him the right to fulfil his obligations as an MPP. Mr Hansen, any questions of this gentleman?

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): No, I don't. I just came in for a minute.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

Mr Hansen: Okay.

The Chair: Yes, sir. Go ahead.

Mr Offer: I just hope Mr Hansen will allow you the same courtesy that you've given to him in his committee, but I have no further questions.

Mr Carr: That's the insurance committee, of course.

I had a couple of questions. Initially when the proposal for OTAB came up, I think a lot of the chambers of commerce were pleased that the government was going to be addressing training, because I think everybody realized that there's a tremendous need out there. When we get into it and see how it's going to be structured—I'll give you an example of the way I see it working. A lot of small and medium businesses represented by the different chambers would like to do some training. As you know, we've got the Ford Motor company in the Oakville area. When this board gets set up in my own area, what I see happening is that, whatever amount of money we get, they will get the bulk of the funds. They're unionized, CAW, and they're right now doing a lot of the training themselves. What I see happening is them saying, "Fine, the government's put this program in place. We are now represented on the board," and they're going to get the vast majority of the money. Do you see whatever money flows out of this only going to, number one, large companies and, number two, unionized companies? Would you like to comment on that? Is that what you see happening?

Mr McNaughton: I see the possibility of that happening due to the criteria that this money flows from. It often limits the needs of the small business people and the entrepreneurs. The opportunity for the OTAB, and consequently the LTAB, given the correct mandate, could perhaps make sure that some funds are flowed where they're needed.

Mr Carr: With the amount that is being spent putting this program together, basically what was done is that the government has said: "We can do it better. We're going to set up this board. We're going to tell you who can get the money to train." If we were to take the same amount of money, whatever that be—and there are different figures, but let's say, to round it off, \$1 billion—if we were to say to the business community in the province of Ontario, "We will give the corresponding same amount, \$1 billion, in some type of tax credits to do training," do you believe that the companies in this province would do training if in fact they were to receive a bigger economic benefit through some type of tax credits in the province of Ontario, or do you see them, if we don't set this up, just going away and not getting involved as much as I think they need to in terms of training?

Mr McNaughton: I believe that for the most part all companies in Ontario have realized the need for training and they would use those funds wisely.

Mr Carr: Terrific. One last question. Long-term, the big question that we have is, "What type of training for what?" That's the big question in all this. Regardless of whether you like OTAB or don't like it or whether we do training or what type of workers, we won't be successful unless we do the right training. As somebody representing the business community in your area, what are the types of skills you think we should be preparing for as we head into the next century?

Mr McNaughton: Certainly the technological skills that are going to be required and for a large part the softer skills, the human resource skills, the focus on total quality management. All of those things are going to become very necessary and I think those are the areas a lot of people are looking at.

Mr Carr: One other question just twigs a little bit. We heard from colleges and universities and boards of education during the pre-budget finance hearings, and basically they were saying we're in serious, serious trouble because of funding. Universities don't have the computers we need. We need upgrading. The trustees came in and said, "We don't have enough money." Correspondingly, we're failing education. The kids are coming out and they can't read and write, have low math skills.

If you had, say, \$1 billion to spend in the province of Ontario and you were going to spend it, would you put it into something like OTAB or would you put it back into our colleges and universities and our education system, which I think everybody on all sides agree is slipping? If you had \$1 billion, what would you do with it?

Mr McNaughton: I certainly wouldn't put it all in one pot. I would give a major portion of it to our education system because it is suffering badly and as the months go by it becomes even more serious a problem. But a lot of this training that we're all talking about is necessary but not available and I think there need to be a lot of development funds as well.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you, Mr McNaughton, for your presentation. You raise a number of important issues here.

First, on the representation, you're concerned about northern Ontario. Of course the appointments we've made according to government criteria, with the recognition that the makeup of the board has to reflect the makeup of the province. There will be geographic things taken into account there, so I think you can expect that all areas of the province will be covered.

I'm from eastern Ontario, Kingston, although I was born and raised in Timmins and spent four years going to Laurentian, so I'm well aware of the northern issues, and I think that's representative of many people in Ontario. We've moved around. So you can't always think that where representatives come from is going to be their only reference point.

The same thing I think holds for the sectors they're coming from. We've heard a lot, even this morning and throughout the committee hearings, that people are going to rise above the kind of sector they came from. I think it's understood that for this to work—and I just go back to the previous question about how the government has said, "We can do it best." It's totally wrongheaded. I think we've all agreed, everyone who's come here, that the one point of agreement is that training isn't working now. Nobody has a single answer. That's why people are being brought around the table, everyone who's involved in training, government, certainly, but employers, workers and people who want to be working. These are the people who are going to come around the table to make these decisions. I think that, again,

the admission is that we don't know the best way forward based on the past but hearing the submissions that we're hearing is a very hopeful development, that people agree that sharing responsibility is the way to go for training, and then moving into other areas of the economy perhaps, but I'd like your views on the sharing aspect to see what you think of that.

1210

Mr McNaughton: I believe that the sharing is invaluable, but there will be a lot of resistance to that sharing if there's not some action from it.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. As I say, that's the whole idea of bringing the people who are involved, the people who need training, the employers, the workers and potential workers—and we've heard a lot of, "Let's get on with it," and that's what we're trying to do here.

The other thing is, you mentioned the cost. Of course that is an important consideration, but part of the realization is that a lot of that money is being wasted, which is an economic failure but also a human failure in that it's begin wasted. People who could use the training and then get into the workforce aren't getting it. That's another reason for bringing in people who are in that category, and it's largely people with disabilities, for instance, visible minorities, women, who have been shortchanged in the training systems of the past. Now they're going to be at the table to make sure their interests are represented, which will be a benefit to everyone, the economy plus the human, and it'll address the human waste that has gone in the past. I'd like your view of that.

Mr McNaughton: That's certainly a point well taken. My point in the presentation was that it could be done with substantially less cost and the same end achieved.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, that's going to be part of the deliberation, to make sure that the money that is being spent and the figure that is being used—\$400 million to \$500 million is what is being spent now. Again, that's over a number of ministries and a number of spread-out programs. By bringing them under one umbrella with this board that has the main people around the table, then it will be spent more efficiently and there will be better monitoring systems to make sure that the programs are doing what they're designed to do.

Have you any idea I guess of how that will work in your community? Again, if the local boards—which is something else you raised. The reason why it's not laid out in the legislation is that this is enabling legislation. We can't put in the legislation things that will affect the federal government, as this does. The local boards will be set up in consultation with the federal government through both the government and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. That's the reason why it's set out in that way.

Again, that allows the maximum consultation with community representatives. The experience that has been built up through the CITCs won't be lost. It can be included, but, again, it's been recognized in some areas CITCs don't represent the community. People have been excluded, and the failure for training programs is only too evident in the unemployment rates among many groups.

Mr McNaughton: Yes, and I believe I addressed that issue that people have been excluded because the mandate dictated by the funding agencies was such that there was no advantage to them being there. Change that mandate and then you include those people. It doesn't require rebuilding the whole system.

Mr Gary Wilson: Don't you see, though, that by bringing people around the table, then that will be built into the system, that everybody's views will be represented?

Mr McNaughton: It certainly will, but at a much higher cost.

Mr Gary Wilson: We don't think so, but, Tony, do you have a question?

Mr McNaughton: I hope it works that way.

Mr Gary Wilson: Is there any more time, Mr Chair?

The Chair: You have one more question, if you wish.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): It's good to see somebody from the north take the time out of what is probably a busy schedule to come all the way down here and present. We had a number of people yesterday. This morning we had a gentleman from the Sault. Yesterday we had a woman from Thunder Bay. I agree with you. It's absolutely imperative that our views—I'm from Sault Ste Marie and Len's from Kapuskasing—be heard loud and clear and that we be represented on these boards. Just the issues of distance and weather alone create all kinds of nuances for us in the north as we try to do education. Have you any suggestions as to how we might perhaps force, for lack of a better word, the business group and the labour group to make sure that they include northern people in their entourage, or is there some other way we might do that?

Mr McNaughton: I believe that they are attempting to do that. The point in my presentation was that I believe that should be mandatory. I think it should go beyond an attempt.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr McNaughton, the committee thanks you and the Sudbury and District Chamber of Commerce for your interest, for coming to Toronto and sharing your views with us. You've made a valuable contribution to this process and we are grateful.

Mr McNaughton: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you kindly, sir. Have a safe trip back home.

We had agreed as a committee yesterday evening that we would resolve the issue of amendments and process today at this point in time. It's unlikely that there's going to be a consensus—

Mr Gary Wilson: No Liberals here.

The Chair: —because we have some vacancies. What's the pleasure of this committee?

Mind you, it's already Thursday. On Friday people are going to be either in their ridings or travelling back. They're going to be back here on Monday beginning clause-by-clause. It seems to me that any meaningful discussion about, let's say, four or five days' notice of a proposed amendment to be made by a caucus is moot because there simply isn't four or five days. It's going to happen on Monday one way or the other.

Of course an amendment doesn't even necessarily have to be in writing, but as a courtesy I would expect that people proposing amendments would put them in writing, would make enough copies for all the members of the committee and would give them to committee members as far in advance as possible. Otherwise, committee members are going to be asking for recesses and seeking opportunities to consult among themselves or with their research people and it's going to foul up the process. So if people want to foul up the process, they can decline to give advance notice; if people don't want to foul up the process, they can give as much advance notice as possible. Yes, sir.

Mr Carr: I was just going to say I had some amendments that were passed over by my colleague Dianne Cunningham that I can table. I must admit I wasn't aware—and it's probably a good thing—of any of the problems that may have happened with regard to these amendments. What I plan on doing is just tabling some today, and hopefully we can put out some more. The reason for the delay has been in order to make sure we got every one in, because, as you can well expect, they're still coming in as we do it. So I have some today that I could table with you. I don't know how quickly the clerk can get them out for the members to take a look at, but certainly they'll be able to take a look at them.

The Chair: I appreciate that, and I trust, Mr Wilson, that you're indicating that any government amendments will be produced as soon as they possibly can be and distributed amongst committee members either by yourself or by one of the government caucus or by the clerk.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, of course.

The Chair: Thank you. Yes, sir, Mr Huget.

Mr Huget: First of all, I appreciate the courtesy being displayed by the third party and I hope the Liberal Party will do the same in terms of tabling amendments as quickly as possible so that we can indeed review them. I think that doesn't preclude anyone from introducing an amendment at any point in time as the hearings unfold. So I think that issue is resolved. There may be an outstanding issue that perhaps was sort of arrived at by consensus yesterday, and I would like confirmation of that, that we would set our regular hours from 2 till 5 on Monday and 10 till noon and 2 to 5 on subsequent days until we've completed the process.

The Chair: That was my understanding of the consensus that was reached yesterday evening. It's everybody else's understanding?

Mr Huget: That's my understanding.

The Chair: Good, it's been confirmed.

Mr Huget: Then it's agreed.

The Chair: As it is, people are watching and saying: "What, 2 to 5 on Monday, 10 to noon and 2 to 5 the rest of the week? They call that work?"

Mr Gary Wilson: I think they heard about the deliberation that goes on here too, Mr Chair.

The Chair: I've been trying to make that clear to people. Thank you kindly, people. We're recessed until 1:30, please.

The committee recessed at 1218.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 1335.

PERFORMANCE III UNLIMITED INC

The Chair: It's 1:35. We've been waiting since 1:30. My apologies to the presenters. We haven't quite got a quorum yet. Mr Marchese, Mr Wilson, Mr Huget, Mr Carr and Mr Turnbull are here. Notwithstanding that there's no quorum, it's unfair to make these people wait any longer.

Please come forward, sir, and your colleagues. I don't know who's making the presentation. Tell us who you are and your title. The camera crew with legislative broadcast is going to do their best to keep the camera on you. They're very good at it, because this is being broadcast. Be kind to them. They work real hard, and we don't want any real fast moves from one end of the room to the other.

Mr Greg R. Lowe: I'll stay still. Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Please go ahead.

Mr Lowe: Thank you, Mr Chair and members of the standing committee on resources development on Bill 96. My name is Greg Lowe and I'm president of my own company called Performance III Unlimited Inc. I'm an entrepreneur and I've been in business now for about a year and a half. I'd like you to share some experiences that I've had as an entrepreneur and what I see in our society and in particular our education system.

The first thing I'd like to ask you to do is maybe help me out a little bit. I'd like to ask you to clasp your hands like this. Could you do that for me? Everybody clasp their hands.

Interjection: They're clasped.

Mr Lowe: They're clasped. Okay. Could you do that, Gary?

Mr Carr: Yes.

Mr Lowe: Could I ask who has their left thumb on the top? Anybody? Who has their right thumb on the top? Everybody? Yes.

The way they go, they've done some psychological surveys and they figured out that the people with their left thumb on top are the warm, compassionate people. They might say the sexy ones. The ones with the right thumb on top are the thinkers, the intellectual ones, the smart people.

Did anybody have their thumb side by side? Those people just think they're sexy.

I'd ask you to reclasp your hands in the other position, so wherever you had them reclasp them. How does it feel?

Mr Rosario Marchese (Fort York): Uncomfortable.

Mr Lowe: That's really what change is all about, isn't it? This is what's happening in our country—massive change. We have to restructure and change things and it's very difficult, because we tend to go back to our old ways of doing things, our old paradigms. Sometimes those old models don't work, but we have to come out of our comfort zone in order to change.

I'd like to just share some ideas on change with you today. The first one would be here. If you could just take a moment and count the number of F's in that statement.

Mr Marchese: Three.

Mr Lowe: Everybody had enough time? Okay. How many had three? How many had four? Anybody with five, six, seven? Let's count them. There's one—that's the trick one—there's two, three, four, five, six, seven. Okay. We just found out you are all intelligent people, so what's going on here? Can anybody tell me?

Interjection.

Mr Lowe: That's right. We tend to skim over things and also we can't read the "of"; it's a V. That's our conditioning. A lot of times when we get stuck in our paradigms, we can't see or hear other points of view. So what I'd encourage you to do is just stretch yourself out a little bit in this presentation and perhaps in some of the other ideas that you're hearing throughout these hearings to take a look at alternate points of view, because until there's an alternate view, there's no shift in thinking. That's one of the basic principles in learning.

When I became an entrepreneur, I thought I'd better go learn how to do that, so I went to Sheridan College and I got a certificate from FACE, the Foundation for the Advancement of Canadian Entrepreneurs. It's part of HAPITAC, the Halton and Peel Industries Training Advisory Committee. They taught the principles of lateral thinking, because as a business executive coming out of Levi-Strauss as a national sales manager, I was stuck in a paradigm and I realized I had to work to get out of that.

Since going to the FACE program through Sheridan, which was all through private sector trainers whom the college brought in to teach us how to do that—these were successful people who had made a million dollars; they came in to teach us these principles—I've gone on to take self-esteem seminars with Jack Canfield in California and I'm currently taking my master practitioner degree in neuro-linguistic programming, which is the basis of Tony Robbins's work. Has anybody heard of Tony Robbins? He's probably one of the biggest worldwide trainers today.

Mr Carr: On TV at night.

1340

Mr Lowe: That's right. A multimillion-dollar success story.

I went to that, and this is one of the things they exposed us to: Where are we in Canada? They talked about us on a world scale and what we have to do to succeed. As Canadians, we're very good at creating bureaucracies in our schools or our governments or our companies. We were all educated and brought up on those bureaucracies.

Unfortunately, our gross national product is only about 5% towards producing goods. As we all know, a lot of the Americans are taking their pilot factories home because of our way of thinking here. The premise is that in order to be a world-class country we have to change the way we think.

We have to come out of that old paradigm and be more competitive on a world scale.

Here are some of the numbers that prove that. This is from the World Economic Forum. These are last year's numbers. I haven't got the updates yet. In terms of international orientation, of the 23 industrialized countries measured, this is where we stand: As you can see, patents to residents, we're at 19th; patents abroad, 16th; world export markets, 23rd, dead last. We're behind most of the Third World countries. So the prognosis at this point in time isn't that great. Even though we say on TV we're the greatest country in the world—I believe that; I'm a Canadian and proud of it—we have a long way to go.

If you take a look at the future, the numbers don't look that much better. Of course, we see number seven there. In company training, we're 20th. We're behind the Japanese, the Americans and the Europeans in a big way and we have to mobilize ourselves to rejuvenate our country.

I suggest that could start back into the old model. If you take a look at it, I came out of that. I was a senior manager with Levis, Playtex, TNT Canada, and I was in a paradigm of top-down control.

The world is coming out of that dependent way of doing things to a more independent and an interdependent way of thinking. Life is all hell in the mind. As Einstein said, "If you can hold it in your head, you can hold it in your hand."

When I went to the Sheridan College FACE program, they taught me about interdependence. That is the definition of an entrepreneur. They're interdependent. That could be defined as the European Common Market. They're struggling to become interdependent with all their differences. That's the definition of the Japanese work circle—it's interdependence.

The stretch or the desire to take an old model to create the new world is very tenable. I don't know if that'll work. I've found personally I had to become independent first, as Stephen B. Covey would say—in the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, he creates a centre of influence—and learn how to work with other people. It's a learned skill and it suggests our schools aren't teaching that today.

This is Stephen Covey's model. He's talked about the dependence. We've been created as dependants in this country, on the system, on our schools, our government. What I believe we have to do is become independent in ourselves and then learn interdependence with the rest of the world, just as the Europeans and the Japanese are trying to do.

The other book I read was a book by Robert Kiyosaki and it was about the school system. I do a lot of work in the school system. I teach kids. I work with kids at the YMCA who've dropped out of school. His premise is, if you want to be rich and happy, don't go to school. That's a little bit of a blunt statement, but what he's talking about there is the learning process within the school system. What happens is that it's a blame-frame kind of teaching where it's trying to get the right answer rather than experiencing the learning process through trial and error, where you go through a process of learning. It's like riding a bike: You get on the bike, you fall off, you get up and you

ride it again until you can competently ride that bicycle. You can't learn to do that inside a classroom. It's very difficult. It boils down to: it's not what you know, it's what you do with what you know.

After learning all this and spending the time on myself, I went into the school system and became involved with business-education partnerships. This is through the YMCA. In March of last year, I was invited to speak to the business advisory board in Burlington in conjunction with the YMCA, and I started to learn more about what's happening in our schools and in fact what happened to me as a student. Later, on March 31, I was invited to a symposium up in Markham where they had 250 or so principals and vice-principals and they talked about the school system and what had to be done.

The reason for that was a 30% dropout rate. It's a bit of a problem. In Halton it's not quite that high; it's about 8%. I see the results of that at the YMCA through the YES program. Kids that have shut down; creative people who really are a product of a system that isn't working very well any more.

When I went to the symposium in Markham, or Milton I should say, this is the document that was handed out to the delegates, and it says:

"So why change? 'The education systems are dysfunctional and incredibly inefficient,' Brown told the OFT delegates. 'The student body is more diverse. Today's job market demands a high level of literacy. We have a high illiteracy rate coming out of our schools. The teaching practices must come into sync with learning, research, and with trends and organizational management. There is much evidence that many students do not retain knowledge coming through the system. The system's tolerance through innovation is limited and its effects are short lived. The world's economy is forcing system redefinition in all work sectors.'"

My concern here today is that when I read the OTAB bill—I think it's a great effort here, but when I read, "To make effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources," and a real feeling that the private sector is going to be blocked from this effort, I'm concerned as a father. I have two daughters in the system and I see what's happening to them. And I'm concerned as a Canadian for our country, because I really believe the system, not the teachers—there are a lot of great teachers in there—doesn't work. It's not producing the result. So when I see it's taking that old model and applying it to try to make this country world class, I'm concerned, and I'm asking why. Why are we doing this? Why are we not admitting the fact that we have some problems there and going back and addressing the issue in our school system that's producing a 30% dropout rate, and not take a model that isn't working well and apply it as a solution to the future?

I feel like this guy here. Where are you now? This guy, he got stuck. He knows where he is, but he's stuck inside something and he's got to figure a way out. I think this is one way out, but I really encourage you that the private sector is probably the place that you should go for the solution, as Sheridan College did. They brought the entrepreneurs into that system, to teach them how to do that,

because a lot of the people in the bureaucracies have never been in that arena before of making wealth. I think we have to go to that arena for the solution.

That's what I have to say to you today and that's been my personal experience. I see it very clearly. I devote a lot of my time to the school system and I will continue to do that, and work with the kids through the YMCA who need help.

I thank you very much.

Mr Carr: Thank you very much. Greg and I actually have worked together in the past. I'm a former TNT employee too and I know of some of your work and I think it's terrific.

One of the things I wanted to impress upon the government is the numbers we need. The reason we need the private sector is because in order to do the amount of training that needs to be done in such a diverse economy as ours, we need to have the private sector, because it can have people spring up, people like Arleen who springs up and does training. She's going to present later. These are the types of people who will come about and be able to give training based on providing a good service to the public. So I agree.

Is that essentially what you were trying to get across to this government, that we're never going to be able to reach the number of people we need to give the training we need to do unless the private sector is involved?

1350

Mr Lowe: Yes, I believe so, because I came out of big business, and they are now hiring me back into that because I have an appreciation for the environment to help them change that system. It's very difficult to change a paradigm when you're inside the paradigm. I don't know how you do that. All you see are trees and you can't see the forest. So I believe that people outside of that paradigm, people like yourself, you've got business experience, need to go back in and teach the people inside how to change.

Mr Carr: This has been what a lot of the groups have mentioned. The Canadian Manufacturers' Association—I think you were here for that—said the same thing as well. They'd made a couple of amendments. I think what you're talking about is just making sure the government's aware of that, and I thank you.

With regard to the bill specifically, is there anything else? I think you made a valid presentation to show the type of skills that are out there in the private sector, but in terms of this bill, is there anything else that we, as the Legislature, should be doing to ensure that this thing works properly? Is there anything else you can think of?

Mr Lowe: I think you may want to take a look at the definitions of education and training. What is training? When I look in the schools, I see it as a process, you might call it education, where people are gaining information or perhaps knowledge. But in order to create a skill, which is more the how-to, you have to have understanding, and that's what I see missing, the understanding and awareness and then the actual skill, which is really an industry. I think that has to be brought into this system, maybe working hand in hand with the educational system, but part of it is rejuvenating the system itself.

Mr Carr: I want to talk specifically on something that I think has come up with this, and I don't know if you know this. My sense, having worked for a highly unionized company like TNT, is that I honestly truly believe that the actual workers—and I've been out there and worked on the floor, because I actually spent some time as one of the members of the union, unloading trucks, as well—the average person out on the work floor, even in that unionized environment, really wants the skills that are needed. Has that been your experience as a trainer, that putting aside the political differences, the men and women out on that shop floor really want to have better skills so they're going to have their jobs?

Mr Lowe: Absolutely, and I believe there are very good people out there, but they're caught in a system that they can't get out of. It tends to shut down creativity. The systems were designed to put nuts on the wheel of a car or unload a truck; they weren't designed to allow people to use their creativity. I work with shop floor people too. I've been in that environment myself. They're great people. In fact, I was with one company, a construction company, where the workers actually set the mission statement for the company. They know what's going on. I believe that's where the enlightenment is, on the shop floor. Free it up; open it up.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Marchese, Mr Wilson, Mr Farnan, share your time equally and fairly, please.

Mr Marchese: How much time is there, Mr Chair?

The Chair: Four minutes.

Mr Marchese: Four minutes? I had so many questions for you. As you probably know, in Germany the private sector spends anywhere from \$10 billion to probably \$15 billion in training its workers.

Mr Lowe: That's right.

Mr Marchese: The private sector is doing that.

Mr Lowe: Yes.

Mr Marchese: In this country, the private sector has not been doing that ever.

Mr Lowe: We're 20th.

Mr Marchese: In fact, the educational system is the body of people that we've relied on to do the training, with inadequate tools and inadequate machinery. It takes us years to do something that one could do in the workplace in a few months. What we're doing with OTAB is what I thought you were talking about through the theme of interdependence of the private sector, the public sector, labour and other social groups: bringing them into one body to talk about the training needs for the next coming decades. Is that not your understanding of what we're doing?

Mr Lowe: No, not from reading this document.

Mr Marchese: What do you understand we're doing, again?

Mr Lowe: I don't see a place for someone like myself. I've been trying to solicit the public sector to use my services, and I've been relatively unsuccessful. I direct my efforts directly to industry. I've been in this system, the

school system, and it's not just the tools that are missing; I think it's the training of the people there that's missing.

Mr Marchese: So in what way do you believe that you as a consultant can feed into this process?

Mr Lowe: I believe as a consultant I can bring in concepts like Stephen Covey teaches here in terms of self-empowerment and creative thinking and lateral thinking skills. The school system the way it is isn't geared to do that. Within it, I see a lot of very enlightened people, but I also see a lot of very restricted people.

Mr Marchese: I actually had lots of questions on education, but I'm going to leave it to my colleagues.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, it was a very stimulating discussion, Greg, and thank you for coming out. I'll just make the comments I had, and you've actually referred to them. When you began, it sounded as though you thought we were very complacent about training, about the way we've been doing things. But in the course of the committee hearings, we've been hearing about how much pain there is out there, about people the training system in particular hasn't been serving, and they know that things have to change, and that's why we're proposing this model, to bring everybody around the table.

You said there's a lot of experience on the work floor. Well, there's a place for labour on here; there's also a place for the employer. There's a place for people who want to be working, and there's a place for the trainers and educators. You're in the system. A steering committee has been set up, and it has come up with some proposals and has nominated people. There's going to be a reference group that the director will be able to tap into. So this is a system that's going to include all the knowledge that's out there for both the training needs and for how they should be met. So again, I think we recognize how much the system isn't working, and we're making proposals to make it work.

Mr Lowe: Okay.

Mr Mike Farnan (Cambridge): Mine is also a comment; very simply, it's the presumption that I hear in your remarks that the private sector is somehow immune from deficiencies. There are good private sector trainers, and there are inadequate private sector trainers. To presume that simply because you have a private sector trainer you are getting good quality is, in my view, without truth.

The reality of the matter is that in the public sector there have been outstanding contributions to training. There is certainly room for improvement, but I can think of individuals within the public service, within the school systems, who are doing an outstanding job. What we're doing here is bringing all this together. It does not exclude the private sector. The good private sector consultant will be hired, based on his track record, his quality and his competence, but let's not be unrealistic. Let's not think for one minute that simply because one sets oneself up with a shingle that says, "Private sector consultant," and there are some books which say, "Well, here's what this expert or this expert says," that in fact then that individual can deliver a quality service.

I liked your presentation today. It wasn't a bad advertisement for the work that you do, but I just want to put it

to you that, yes, we want a partnership between private and public sector, but we want the best of the private sector and the best of the public sector.

Mr Ramsay: Greg, I really enjoyed your presentation today. You're a breath of fresh air, and these hallowed halls need more of that. It needs more than a breath of fresh air; it needs shaking up. I'd like to answer some of the questions you put out, because you're asking why we are using an old model. I agree with you. We've got an idea that in a rapidly changing world was probably starting to be hatched in 1986-88, but we're using a 1970s model in it. We've got a big bureaucracy. We're creating a big elephant that's going to try to lumber down the trail of training, and we need some fast-hitting action to get this economy redone.

The reason is that there's a prejudice in this government against the private sector. It's not that you get paid for what you do, but you do a no-no, you make a profit from what you do, and that's almost evil. It's so evil, in fact, that it's in this act and it's spelled out that not only should we, number 15 here, "make effective use of Ontario's diverse educational training resources," which I agree with, but then for some reason we've got to do some nurturing here and we've got to put in, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education system."

Why do we have a nursemaid piece of legislation here to try to support something that needs to be shaken up? Even people in the industry understand it needs to be shaken up. What we need is more entrepreneurial public service in this country so the taxpayers get value for money and so the people in the public service feel good about themselves, that they are doing a great job, that they're out there—sorry to use the C-word, people—competing with everybody else. We're all winners, and that's the type of mindset we need to have. I might say, your Premier maybe is trying to move you along that way a little bit, but he's having a hard go. But thanks for that, and please give me a comment.

1400

Mr Lowe: Mr Farnan, there are two views here. It's not the people I'm talking about, it's the model. There are great people in the education system, and there are great people in the private sector, and they work like that, but I think your point of an old model is the key. It's the model that's not working: the people on the shop floor or the teachers or whatever are fine.

Mr Farnan: You're talking about bringing the best of all together.

Mr Lowe: The best of all the people, but you have to choose the right model.

Mr Farnan: You're endorsing the bill.

Mr Lowe: Not really.

The Chair: Mr Lowe, thank you kindly, you and your company, Performance III, which is located in Burlington, Ontario.

Mr Lowe: That's correct.

Mr Carr: What's the phone number?

The Chair: The phone number is 634-3999.

Mr Lowe: Thank you.

The Chair: I don't see why not. If people want to get a hold of him, they can reach him in Burlington at 634-3999. We are grateful to you for coming here and sharing your views with us. You obviously provoked members of the committee; that is a good thing. You clearly have left an impression. We're thankful that you took time out of your own schedule to share your views with us and to play a very important part in this process. Thank you kindly, sir. Have a safe trip back home.

SECRETARIAL TRAINING FOR EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

The Chair: The next participant is the secretarial training for employment program. Would the spokesperson for STEP, secretarial training for employment program, please come forward, have a seat, tell us your names, your positions if you wish, and please try to save the second 15 minutes for questions and exchanges.

Mr Paul Chamberlain: We'd like to thank you for providing us with this opportunity to present our thoughts and concerns about the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. My name is Paul Chamberlain. I'm the director of adult education at Dixon Hall. Dixon Hall is a multiservice neighbourhood centre which provides a broad range of services, programs and supports to our local community, which includes Regent Park, Canada's largest and oldest public housing project.

Two of Dixon Hall's programs which will be directly affected by OTAB are the Regent Park Learning Centre, which for the last five years has been providing literacy training to local adults, and STEP, our secretarial training for employment program, which has an excellent 10-year record of providing training and finding employment for single mothers on government assistance. It is with this background and from this perspective that we're addressing you this afternoon.

We'd like to be clear that we fully support the creation of a one-stop integrated body to coordinate, plan and create policy for the delivery of upgrading literacy and skills training in the province of Ontario. We do, however, have a number of concerns about how this might happen, and we have two major points to make.

Firstly, it is absolutely critical that OTAB recognize the importance of community-based training and literacy programs as an integral component in the delivery of skills training and literacy in Ontario and also that this be demonstrated by stable financial support and by the creation of specific seats to represent these constituencies on OTAB councils and local boards.

Secondly, we believe it is essential that the training system in Ontario be learner-centred. There are a number of other points which flow from these, but let me elaborate.

To illustrate the first point, the need to recognize the important function of community-based training, two of our graduates here will shortly tell their stories. This will demonstrate far more eloquently than I can the kinds of accessibility and support that make community-based training the only viable training opportunity for many

people who live in the province of Ontario. We are a small but critical part of the skills training delivery system in Ontario and we are not currently being adequately represented on OTAB.

It has been said that community colleges can represent the community-based trainers or even that community-based trainers should all be affiliated with community colleges.

STEP is affiliated with George Brown College here in Toronto. This affiliation has been a long-standing and mutually beneficial relationship. However, we feel most strongly that this relationship has worked as well as it has because it has been voluntary and mutually chosen; it has not been an enforced relationship.

We are also convinced that a community college cannot adequately represent our interests and concerns in a forum such as OTAB. While the colleges and community-based trainers share many issues and many points of view, there are just as many places where these differ. The colleges, as large institutions, have their own priorities distinct from those of community-based trainers.

Similarly, we'd also like to be clear that boards of education, essential though they are to the delivery of literacy in this province, are not community-based literacy programs and they cannot represent this constituency.

Community-based trainers are pivotal in the delivery of skills training and literacy to equity groups. We fully support the implementation of equity principles at all levels of operation for OTAB, and this should include the members selected to represent each constituency of the board.

It is essential that those representing the various constituencies be accountable to those whom they represent. Resources must therefore be made available both to facilitate this accountability, setting up reference groups and so on, and also to ensure that there is no financial barrier to any appropriately selected person participating in this process.

Community-based trainers provide skills training to about 5,000 people in Ontario each year through more than 300 programs. This significant participation in the provincial training process must also be recognized by ensuring that these programs have stable, multi-year core funding.

I said that training in Ontario must be learner-centred. This is perhaps not a popular proposition in a period when, in order to encourage business and industry to increase its participation in training, it is said that all training must be employer-driven. Clearly, there are major areas where the need for skilled labour on the part of employers and the need for training by those who want and need to work do coincide. People will not want to be trained for jobs that don't or won't exist.

However, it is critical that all training teach generic and transferable skills, not just skills for one specific job. We are not saying that the private sector should not be involved in training—clearly, it should be—however, we do believe that public funding should go to not-for-profit or public sector training.

If training were learner-centred, we should not have seen the recent shift of training funding and eligibility to UI recipients, a situation that has made it almost impossible for many social assistance recipients to access training.

With the inclusion of literacy under the OTAB mandate, this learner-centred approach becomes even more critical. Literacy is a basic right, and access to programs cannot be contingent on those programs providing job writing as training. While this is a function of many of the literacy programs at the moment, making this the rule rather than the exception would end up denying essential literacy training to many Ontario residents.

Learner-centredness will ensure that the often essential additional supports will be provided. Adequate income, transportation and child care are some of the more usual supports required to make a program truly accessible.

The Jobs Ontario experience has shown some of the problems that arise from attempting to be employer-driven and not taking the time to set up representative structures to guide the policy and implementation. Let us not repeat those mistakes.

To reiterate then, we are calling on the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, at its inception, to recognize the importance of community-based training and to do this by ensuring stable funding for the programs and to ensure adequate representation on OTAB.

We are also encouraging you to ensure that all training in Ontario be learner-centred, providing generic transferable skills which will be accessible, because the necessary collateral supports are in place.

I'd like to introduce Zoe Cormack-Jones who is the workplace coordinator for STEP.

Ms Zoe Cormack-Jones: Thank you, Paul. Thank you, everybody, for inviting us here this afternoon. I'd like to tell you a little more about our program, the secretarial training for employment program.

We are a program for sole-support mothers on government assistance. We believe in a holistic approach to learning. We want not just to teach the hard skills, we want to teach the soft skills as well. Often our students have been through other training programs and they haven't succeeded. After the first month in the classroom, our students go out to a workplace two days a week, which is carefully monitored. With the workplace connection, we keep on top of the current trends in electronic devices, and the workplaces help us and work with us to teach the softer skills to students.

Often in an office, people just don't want students. They don't want workers who will wear sneakers all day. The offices do not always like how our students speak, and these aren't our immigrants. Often the Canadian speakers will say things such as "I seen it," or "I wanna go." Then the offices will phone us and ask us to try to work with the students on their speech. They'll say such things as "I'm gettin' it," or "youse guys." These are all complaints we've received in the office. These are things we have to work with, on top of the computer skills.

Sometimes the students may talk about inappropriate subjects at work, and the workplaces will get in touch with us. Maybe the student wears sneakers all day. Maybe the student isn't dressed appropriately. Some offices don't like bare arms in an office etc. These are things, the softer skills, that through our community-based approach we feel we can handle.

In our program, we try to provide as many helps as we can in such areas as clothing, shoes, makeup, shampoos, deodorants etc, not only to the women but also to the children.

We've been in existence for about 10 years. A recent survey showed that our graduates are now making approximately \$1.5 million. When you think about it, these are all people who before were on social assistance.

I'd now like to introduce Mary Brown, on my left who is one of our graduates from last year.

Ms Mary Brown: Hello. Thank you for having us here today.

When I was growing up in my community, learning was difficult for me, and I remember adults and other children saying I was stupid. As I got older, I knew I wasn't stupid, I just needed a little help and I needed a place to go and not feel intimidated because my brain doesn't work like somebody else's brain.

I remember walking into offices and thinking: "I wish I knew how to type or use a computer," and "I'd love to dress like the secretaries in those offices dress," or "If I could just get a chance without someone saying I have to spend five years in school," or "I would be better at a masonry job." Well, I'm sorry, I don't want to carry bricks around, which someone at the college had told me, and I just thought, "No, I don't want to do this."

I always had a problem with dyslexia, and when I went to the Regent Park Learning Centre, it was no longer a problem for me. After the Regent Park Learning Centre, I needed to upgrade a little bit, and so I went to George Brown outreach, a community outreach in my neighbourhood, at 155 Sherbourne Street, and I upgraded there until the STEP program started in September. After completing the STEP program, I was lucky enough to get a one-year contract at Dixon Hall to be the administrative assistant to the STEP program.

Even now, going to night school in college, I still find it very intimidating. I'm afraid to ask questions for fear that people will just think I'm stupid, so I wait until the next day and go visit Zoe here and ask her, which is not so bad.

Dixon Hall is a place for me to learn, and I love to learn new things. I love to know how the business world works. I'd like to know things like: Who is the one who closes everything down when we get a snowstorm? Is it some fellow looking out his window and saying, "Geez, I think I'd like to go home early today," or do they have to have a vote? How do things like that work? Being at Dixon Hall, I can learn this stuff.

I really feel, living in Regent Park for 17 years and raising my two children there, that the community-based programs that are there in Regent Park are there for people like me, and I don't need to feel intimidated when I'm at Dixon Hall, when I'm asking my supervisors or my executive director how to do things, because they're there for my kind of person.

Ms Cormack-Jones: Thank you, Mary. We have another one of our past graduates, Giesha Fry.

Ms Giesha Fry: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. My name is Giesha Fry. I'm 43 years of age and I have two children, René and Tracy.

I have a dream that one day—and it's stopped there. What happened to me was physical abuse, verbal abuse and mental abuse at the hands of my husband, so that I was out of commission for six months and my jaw was almost broken. to say the least.

The best thing I could have done was get rid of him. That was the very first step. You don't know why I didn't do it earlier, you might say. Well, if you never had it in the family and you're looking for a bit of affection, you thought that was great. Needless to say, it wasn't. I've been on welfare, mother's allowance, UI; got a job, back on UI, back on welfare. It was a vicious circle.

I felt degraded when I was on welfare. Yes, I was happy it was there. It gave my family food and a roof over our heads and some clothes on our backs, but none the less, you still felt degraded sometimes—I did—the way the workers would handle the situation. I was thinking to myself: "Well, what could I do? Finally the kids are getting older and maybe I can go and get a job," which I did. I ended up at Inglis Ltd and worked there for nine years. I got a lot out of Inglis Ltd—I got a lot of intimidation and a back injury. I went for therapy, but the end of that was they moved to the States, to Ohio. Free trade or whatever you want to say—they moved.

I've got the intimidation with me and I got the back injury compensation. It was very good money for the children and myself, to support us and get along, but what was I supposed to do now? Now, skills. If times came down to the worst thing, I even thought, would I go and sell my body as a prostitute on the street to put a roof over my children's and my head, feed us, clothe us? With my luck, they'd probably ask for change. That's just a little bit of a pun. Seriously, what was I going to do? Talk to people? I was going to pull a stunt here, but I was a little bit intimidated by all the suits here, so I declined to do that.

Every time I wanted to speak with somebody, they wouldn't listen. They'd pretend they're listening, or they'd walk out or wait. I can remember one line I was in at welfare. Two girls came up and said, "Well, Sally, are you ready to go to lunch?" They were ready to go to lunch. We'd been standing there early with children, waiting for whatever reason they called us in, but they were going to go for lunch. Then they came back: "Well, now it's too late. You have to come back the next day." That was the type of life; then the abuse. It gives you some indication.

In a way, I was ready, willing and able to get a job, and by any means, I'm not stupid. I might be naïve at times, I grant you that, but I did want to go and upgrade myself, which I did. I went to the Metro labour education centre, which is affiliated with George Brown College, and I got my functional level test and passed. Very good. Then I was directed to go to STEP, went to STEP, which is also affiliated with George Brown College, and presently I'm at George Brown College, working.

Now I think back. Now my dream can go on and start. It was on hold for a long, long time, and now I can go on. I've done a lot of interviews, and one was with Joe Côté

on the radio station. He had asked me, "Giesha, what do you think about Dixon Hall?" What do I think? It was a miracle on Sumac Street. That's the best words that came to me right then and there. I thought I'd stutter. That was a miracle.

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I feel that everyone needs training, but they need the proper training. Colleges, yes, they do intimidate. I'm there right now, and I see the intimidation, and I see that it's a 9 to 5 job. STEP goes beyond that. There's no time frame. Yes, school starts at a certain time, but it doesn't finish at a certain time. They go beyond the call of duty or beyond their job description. They fed us, they sheltered us, they gave us personal skills and technical skills. I don't know what more I can say to all of you. I invite you personally to come down. Go down unannounced and look for yourself and see what goes on and who goes through that front door.

When I speak on the topic of STEP and my experience, I've seen it first hand. It's nothing made up. To me, any student who goes to STEP might have ideas, whether good, bad or indifferent, but they are there to listen. They let you express yourself. Yes, there is a lot of intimidation you feel when you go out, but now we have the skills that we need, and we can contribute back to life what welfare and family assistance gave us at that time when we needed it. Now we are a somebody, and we are winners.

Finally, I just want to say please don't give up on this, because I know for a fact that STEP would never ever give up on the people who need them. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you. We've got time for questions and comments.

Mr Marchese: I just wanted to thank all of you for coming and making that presentation. I wanted to say that I was the chair of the multilingual literacy centre for two years, offering first-language literacy to different language communities. I wanted to acknowledge the work of Dixon Hall. It's one of the first few earlier organizations providing literacy to many people. I think you have provided a great service to the many who went through.

Mr Chamberlain: Over the years it becomes many.

Mr Marchese: I want to agree with you on several issues. Community-based training is essential. The community colleges do not necessarily represent the kinds of things that you do in community-centred learning, nor do boards of education do the things that you do. So I think we need to remember that, because often funding is given to boards of education and is given to colleges and very little comes to community-based centres that provide the kind of learning that is based on the learner model as opposed to the teacher model, where the teacher teaches and the student learns. I wanted to support the approach that you've recommended, both in terms of community-based and learning centres.

I wanted to say a point that one of the reasons we set up OTAB the way we did was to include employers because we felt they needed to be there. So it puzzles me when others ask why the private sector isn't there. We included labour because we felt it performs an essential

service to people as well. What we've also included is a social activist, because we felt that would be the person who would bring your perspective into that training model. So my hope is that what you've been saying, and what others have probably been saying in the past, will continue to be reflected within it, because it talks about interdependence within this model so that all of the concerns are properly reflected. If they're not doing that, I can assure you that many of us will fight for that perspective to be part of it.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. I found the first part informative, but obviously your real life illustrations really back up what you are saying, so I found it very effective. I think it moved all of us here. Unlike my colleague in the government party who just spoke, I don't know why the government says, "Well, maybe we think that the equity people can somehow bring your point of view."

I'm prepared to move an amendment next week that puts you at the table. I think you should be there, and I hope the government listens. I think that community-based training is very important in Ontario. If the idea of OTAB is to bring everybody together, then why are we excluding you folks?

Mr Offer: Rosario will vote in favour of it.

Mr Ramsay: Why are we doing that? I imagine Mr Marchese will probably vote in favour of my motion to bring you to the table, because why do we exclude people?

Regarding the community colleges, you've given the example that we think our kids get out of high school and adults go back and they go to community colleges, but you're giving a story from your perspective that: "Gee, that doesn't suit me. That doesn't fit." So if we want to bring everybody together, let's bring everybody together. You offer an experience that is not shared by other trainers, so you need to be there because you're a partner. I'm going to try to make that happen for you next week.

Mr Chamberlain: That's very good news. Thank you.

The Chair: Mr Offer, briefly.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. On the last page of the presentation, indeed in your conclusion, you stated that it was absolutely necessary that OTAB, at its inception, recognize the importance of community-based training. It seems to me that what you are saying is that the strength of this will lay in the establishment of local community-based boards to deal with issues of training, retraining and adjustment and to be able to reflect the communities that they are in.

If that is the position that you bring forward, I would like to hear that. I think it's important for the government to hear that because the act does not mandatorily establish local boards. Maybe when they hear it from you, they will do what so many others have been calling for: amend the bill to allow community-based groups their right to establish their own programs.

Mr Chamberlain: We do definitely believe that the local boards are going to be critical in the way that OTAB works, as long as the feedback from the local boards to OTAB happens effectively and accountably. One of our concerns as community-based trainers is the number of

levels on which we often feel we need to be working to be able to get our viewpoint and our concerns across. We have the federal level, and we're currently funded federally in terms of the training program, provincially in terms of the literacy and then of course there is the local as well. Having the resources to be able to get our views across at all three levels is often very difficult. The concern is often at the local boards. The broader issues don't get dealt with; they are just the specific and local issues. So I think we need to work at both levels, but the local boards are definitely essential, and we'd support that.

Mr David Turnbull (York Mills): Thank you very much for your presentation. Giesha, I would say that today you've certainly become a suit, whether you realize it or not.

Ms Fry: Thank you very much.

Mr Turnbull: I think your first point is very well taken, the fact that you need to be recognized in the composition of the board. As you know, the present legislation envisages only two seats for educators, and one thing that has become very plain as we've gone through these hearings is the fact that it cannot represent and cannot expect two people from the educator sector to represent the full spectrum of learning. Indeed, you've demonstrated very well today the value of your branch of learning.

I would like to just explore one of the concerns that you had. Your second point was learner-centred education. I think it's very important, but just before your conclusion you spoke about the Jobs Ontario Experience program and employer-driven programs as not working. I hope that you wouldn't consider that to be the only example.

I think that what we've got to get to, and this is what I want you just to sort of maybe explore a little bit more for me, is not that we blind ourselves to thinking that it should just be user-centred. We've got to look at where the opportunities are in the future. Indeed, some industries have experienced the fact that they cannot get workers who are trained and they're desperately searching for these people, and yet we've got so many people unemployed. Perhaps you could just sort of fill that out for me.

Mr Chamberlain: I agree with you wholeheartedly. We are not for a minute saying that the private sector should not be being involved in training. I guess one of the concerns in terms of Jobs Ontario was that we were being told the whole time: "This has to be employer-driven. This is employer-driven." What ended up happening with that is really there were no resources at the intake-and-assessment end, which is where the people were coming in. There weren't really the resources for that.

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But we don't by any means give up on the private sector and the employers and the importance of the employer aspect. In fact, we are involved with Transitions, which is also through Jobs Ontario and is sort of another attempt to work with the private sector, the voluntary sector and the non-profit sector together to make another training program. We couldn't do the work that we do without the involvement of the private sector in a number of ways. So we referred to the placement process, the co-op placements and so on. There are innumerable ways that we get support

from the private sector and from employers and take our direction in terms of many of the things we're training for. We're training towards the employers, and if the people we train aren't going to fit their needs, then we're not doing the job that we need to do.

The Chair: Thank you. On behalf of the committee, I say thank you to Ms Fry, Ms Brown, Ms Cormack-Jones and Mr Chamberlain for what has been a very effective presentation. You've provided a most unique and interesting insight. Your presence here is appreciated very much by the members of this committee. We are thankful to you for taking the time to come here and share your thoughts with us.

Mr Chamberlain: Thank you again for the opportunity, and we'll look forward to hearing that motion next week.

The Chair: Of course this presentation or any other throughout the course of this committee's sitting in this room is available on videotape from your MPP's office free of charge or in Hansard by way of transcript.

COMPUTER-ESE EDUTRAN TRAINING SERVICES

The Chair: The next participant is called Computer-ese, and as the spokesperson for Computer-ese interface with the chairs, I will remind people that these are public hearings. This is the last day that we're in the legislative broadcast arena because we're moving into committee room 1, which is where the auto insurance hearings are being held now, but the public is certainly invited to attend.

Next week, the resources development committee will be dealing with Bill 96 on a clause-by-clause basis, and there will be some interesting debate no doubt then. It'll be some of the last parliamentary work that takes place before the House resumes in. I can't be specific about this, but I expect the House will go back perhaps April 13. That's my best guess based on my contacts. Go ahead, people, because you're one of the last, as I say. This is one of the last parliamentary functions before the House resumes on April 13. Tell us who you are.

Mr Turnbull: Is this the political party that wanted—

The Chair: You're using up their time, Mr Turnbull.

Ms Arleen Reinsborough: Mr Chairman, members of committee on Bill 96 and citizens, I'd like to thank you for this time this afternoon. I feel it's important. I feel I have a lot to say. My issue is very grass roots in its presentation. However, after I present it, I think you'll all see that it is very provincial.

I would like to introduce the person with me, Robyn Peterson of Edutran. She's going to help me present this afternoon. My name is Arleen Reinsborough of Computer-ese. I'm the sole owner of the company at present. I've had offers to grow to a medium-sized company as recently as one month ago. We even incorporated our name. However, everything is now on hold. We will not be hiring and training personnel, support staff or bookkeeping staff. We will not be renting facilities in which to train corporate clients.

After devoting myself to two years of dogged research, freedom of information access, towns, cities, regions and school boards, I've discovered these facts, and I'm going

to put a slide on this afternoon because these figures came from the treasurer of the town of Oakville.

I'd like to acknowledge that present with me today are regional councillor Bill Logan, who is also a councillor for the town of Oakville, and all of my friends and foes in Oakville are now watching me.

The Chair: He should be with you up here.

Ms Reinsborough: I don't know if he wants to do that, but I also have my husband here. Would you like him up too?

The Chair: Maybe your husband would like to come up.

Ms Reinsborough: Come on, everybody. Come on up to the table. Robin, would you go down and look at the figures for local taxation.

I'm going to show you some figures this afternoon that should concern you. They come from Michelle Seguin who is the treasurer of the town of Oakville. The first one shows you how funds are used—property taxes—in the town of Oakville. The next one will show you what the region of Halton uses, and the one on the bottom, that great big one that keeps growing larger and larger all the time, is our school board and how it's eating up \$300 million of taxpayers' money each year. That's not including the grants and that's not including the transfer payments from the federal government and the provincial government. How does that fit in with OTAB? I hope to show you that it really does this afternoon.

I will be addressing how the school boards plan to exercise a large role in the delivery of OTAB training, despite the verbal assurances from the senior policy adviser of OTAB that they will not be preferred deliverers of training. This is also being acted upon at the college and university levels as well.

If you will be patient with me, I will prove this statement as being very suspect through Richard Allen, the former minister's own statements in Hansard, and through this little article I got out of my local paper which says: "\$378,000 of Jobs Ontario Capital fund is going to be given to some of our local schools to retrofit them for what? The grants are made under the province's \$46 million Jobs Ontario Capital fund, which is part of a five-year, \$2.3 billion infrastructure investment program announced by Floyd Laughren." Anybody who wants a copy of this—it was in my local paper—is more than welcome to have it.

The Ontario Federation of Labour president talks of charging a training tax to corporations to help defray the cost of training. However, he also stated in an article in the Hamilton Spectator dated November 21, "The problem at the root of it"—meaning OTAB—"is everyone wants to get to the public trough."

May I remind the president of the OFL that the public trough is funded by the sows and hogs in the private sector that pay business taxes and personal taxes. Sixty per cent of my taxes go to the school board trough, and I would like to just mention this article.

As well, I've got a copy of Steel Labour magazine that says on page 44: "Where training programs are to be provided away from the workplace, they should be delivered

through public educational institutions rather than profit-oriented private sector trainers."

Honourable Richard Allen, Minister of Colleges and Universities and Skills Development, also stated in the Legislative Assembly on November 23, Statements by the Ministry and Responses: "The key to the success of the new workforce development system under OTAB is the power and responsibility that will be shared by the government with those who know best what is needed. We call these people our labour market partners."

I'd like to let everybody know that there's more than labour involved in the marketplace, and I don't know what your definition of "labour" is. Is it unions alone? Because at the business steering committee, you have eight and eight—eight business, eight labour. They are all union representatives. Where in there are some of the leading edge people like the Association of Professional Engineers, which is making powerful decisions that are based for tomorrow's workplace? Where are they in this whole deal? Where are they at that bargaining table? Where are they on those steering committees? They are making decisions for the future.

Our local school boards tell us they are going into business to provide private training. I have a letter dated December 4, and I'd just like to quote from it. On the letterhead of the institution, the ACT centres—those are adult computer training centres that are funded by the local taxpayers; subsidized training centres that my money is paying for to put me out of business.

"The ACT Centre was established by the Halton board in order to better meet the education-training needs of the adult community in the area of computer training. The board had previously passed a motion to accept responsibility for all public taxpayers regardless of their age." I'd like you to remember that, because I'm going to tie it in in a way that's going to shock you, "The demand for daytime computer training could not be met in the secondary schools because the facilities were already used to capacity."

I will now concentrate on how OTAB will affect me by preparing the public sector to compete directly with me in the private sector arena through the school boards. In effect, they are declaring that the school boards will be their partners, and one suspects, their preferred partners.

Motion 280089, dated December 28, 1989, policy 6000-75, issued by the Halton Board of Education, Burlington, Ontario, recognizes its responsibility to educate all people regardless of their age in life. I'm not talking about all working people, I'm not talking about re-entry into the workplace people, I'm talking about all people.

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In other words, the taxpayer is paying for lifelong education with accreditation; just a piece of paper, like this one, saying you completed the course. This will include personal interest courses, like fixing your car, doing your colours, dancing, baking, furniture making etc.

The Halton Board of Education ACT Centre newspaper markets a course in WordPerfect—this is what I'm competing against—for \$130 per person for five days, three hours per day, for a total of 15 hours, GST, materials and data disc included. How do they do this? I'd like to

know as a private sector trainer, because I'd like to compete with them if I can, and I can if subsidies are not used to compete against me.

The taxpayer paid for a loan, first of all, of \$200,000 to start up these labs. I don't have that available to me. How do I get it? I want it.

The taxpayer pays \$167,000 for teaching staff and \$67,000 for the person on duty who manages the lab.

The taxpayer pays for the Halton Board of Education purchasing department to source the hardware for these labs and use their purchasing power to lower the cost to the board. Well over \$200,000 was spent on hardware last year.

The taxpayer pays for the Halton Board of Education staff to place these orders, process the orders and keep the books on all moneys for these debits and credits, all under an umbrella called adult and continuing education. That's a very important phrase. I'd like you to remember that, because you're going to see how it works in after against OTAB.

The taxpayer pays for the marketing of flyers, brochures and newspaper advertisements on the courses offered in these labs. The taxpayer pays for the salary of the supervisor and support staff for 12 months of the year—over \$67,000 per annum for the supervisor alone. Also, as stated in the letter of December 4, page 1, "Advertising is paid out of a budget, which is a line item in the budget of adult and continuing education." Why is there a budget item in the 1992 budget calling for \$1,500 and ending up spending \$10,349, I asked.

The taxpayer pays for the rental space in the Appleview Mall, which is a strip mall where these little labs are located.

The taxpayer paid for the Canada Employment grant, which is a federal grant, of \$30,000.

The taxpayer paid for the Halton and Peel Industries Training Advisory Committee (HAPITAC) grant of \$100,000 per annum.

The taxpayer paid for the Women in Transition grant, and I don't have a figure for that.

Major software companies—this is a real crock here—allow the non-profit parts of the schools to buy their software at ridiculously low prices under the assumption that this software is used to teach full-time students in regular primary or secondary school classes, not in labs that are in direct competition with the private sector of which they are a member.

When these companies were told of this software use, they were, to say the least, shocked. After all, they are private businesses too. They had not been informed of this type of use of their software. They believed the scenario was to help students in regular classrooms to become familiar with their software. In other words, they were being good corporate citizens, offering something of great value—their software—for very little money to help youth learn.

To top it all off, after so many years in operation, a profit has not been realized in the operations of this lab to date. If it were private sector, it would be dead.

If a profit is ever realized, the profit will be moved over to another program in the adult continuing education budget so the ledger can reflect continued non-profit status and shore up other continuing education programs that are failing in order to continue dipping into the taxpayers'

pockets. I can prove this. I have a letter dated December 4 that says it, and I'll just read it. Here it is:

"The ACT Centre has not received Ministry of Education grants. The ACT centre generates revenue through a variety of sources: Fees charged to individuals or companies; Canada employment centres; HAPITAC projects; workplace projects. The board does not have a separate policy for the ACT Centre, and both PST and GST are charged."

I did ask them about that, because they're the non-profit public sector. I said, "You don't have a PST licence." They then sent me another letter on the letterhead of the institution saying they don't charge PST.

As far as that statement I just made that there's a separate budget, okay, here is it. I asked under FOI, "Is there a separate budget for the accounting of operating costs and expenditures for the ACT Centre? Answer—and this is the institution—"No. It is incorporated into the operating budget of the adult and continuing education program." So there is no separation of budget, and I'd like you to remember that when I make a few other statements down the road.

If a profit is ever realized, the profit again will be moved over to another program in the adult continued budget so that the ledger can reflect continued non-profit status. So I would like to ask OTAB this, will OTAB be content to fund teas around the world and ballroom dancing? Also, indications I've had from a certified general accountant after a couple of meetings appear to say that the ACT centres are being subsidized out of local taxpayers' pockets.

The private sector's almost dead in day care and home care. Some other types of businesses that might be in jeopardy are these—some are fictitious and some of them are real:

"The Goodies Bakery Shop: Order now for the holidays, home economics department"; funded by the taxpayer.

"Dancin' to the Music and Step Aerobics: Drop in and work out with the physical education department.

"Photocopying and Printing While-U-Wait: Halton Board of Education printing department"; funded by taxpayer.

"So Your Car Needs Help? Get your oil changes and minor car repairs at your local school, junior mechanic on site, master mechanic for consultations present."

Real case: "Adult Computer Training Centre: We undercut anybody on prices. Employers, get 50% off your employees' training." This is an actual ad taken directly from one of their newspapers.

Each one of you has a newspaper with your package—or you should have—and it will show you what programs are being funded under grants from Ontario Basic Skills in the Workplace. They are mentioned as OBSW programs.

Real case: "Drivers' Ed Program: We undercut anybody on price. Students can now take drivers' education and get picked up at the door of their school.

"The Dresser: Personal seamstress on site for appointments. Bridal parties welcome."

These are not unreal. I did not think that they were going to put \$200,000 in a lab to put me out of business, but they did.

"Paralegal"—anybody who's a paralegal expert here?—"and Counselling Services: Qualified personal and career counsellors, reasonable prices. Family counselling, evenings

or weekends. Social workers on site for easy client service and access. OHIP on some sessions are welcome.

"Furniture While-U-Wait," and there's a scenario on that.

What is wrong with these scenarios? What is healthy about a non-profit public sector competing against private sectors and continually displaying a loss in order to keep their non-profit status so they may continue to collect our taxes to continue to make a loss? Don't you believe this is a dangerous and fraudulent scenario?

We pay for these government agency grants that feed directly into the school system, for some basic—I do question "basic," because as you see here, they've been giving DBase courses, and I can tell you from being a computer trainer that DBase courses require a good knowledge of how to read a book and how to make a database and how to design it. It's very difficult to design a database.

Now there's talk of slapping on a payroll tax to the very people who are supposed to be trained in the first place.

When I go out of business, and I will, and avail myself of all the free retraining without official accreditation or certification towards any other kind of learning, where will I get a job when I graduate? Will I get a job in the public sector bakery, the physical education department, the home economics department, the ACT centres? What good will it do that I have taken courses on dancing and cooking around the world? Why are OTAB training moneys going to shore up courses like this? And they will. If you remember my comment about profit and loss going to shore up all continuing education programs across the board without distinction in the budgetary process as it exists at present, what will that do for job training?

I would like the standing committee on resources development on Bill 96 to justify this to me and to the public in writing. Does this mean that you view the private industry as a thing that's going the way of the dinosaur, that there is no longer such a thing as a private sector? I'd like an answer to that too. I think I know what it is though.

Let businesses and corporations select the trainer of their choice. These are some of my recommendations that might stop the influencing that's going on, and it appears to me that there's a lot of influencing that should stop: Do not try to influence choice by imposing heavy-handed, union-supported solutions; give corporations tax-backs upon tax form submissions based on their year-end with written proof, dollar for dollar, that they've actually done the training; do not continue to unfairly subsidize the public sector, that is, our school boards, colleges and universities, to work against the private sector, thereby making competition a joke rather than a reality.

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My conclusion is that if Ontario is to compete in the present world, we need a strong and thriving private sector, not one that is prevented from competing and doing business through what could be perceived by the public as misuse of tax moneys.

Educating for college or university should not be the goal, and I know that's not OTAB's goal, but I do have some concerns about OTAB, and I will ask Robyn if she would address those after I'm finished. Private training does this job, the training part, realistically and with

proven experience in business and the workplace, not fabricated experience. The proof of this is the chaos our schools, colleges and universities have allowed to happen to date. Every day, private training organizations work with adults who have a fear of reading, writing and whose command of language is so poor that it's virtually stifling their progress in the field of technology.

Training has not occurred—and I heard some of the comments that you have made, Mr Marchese, and I agree with you—as prolifically as it should because business has constantly had to cut corners to meet greater tax increases. The most obvious cuts have been in the area of human resources and training.

If the government is going to subsidize training at all, give businesses the funds and let them go to it. There will be results, and very quickly, especially since the projected funds for training are based on current programs and are around \$400 to \$500 million. That's a lot of money. Do not cut out the best training delivery agents, the private sector, in order to protect the public sector.

That's all I have to say about that. But if anybody wants any documentation, I have with me today every file I've ever FOIed from 1990-93. I'd be glad to give you all the documentation necessary to back up and corroborate my story.

Ms Robyn Peterson: Hi. My name is Robyn Peterson, as was stated earlier. I thought it might be relevant just to throw in a little bit on my own background. I have over 25 years of experience in training in Canada, starting with the Canadian Armed Forces. I also taught secondary school for three years. I have a master's degree in adult education from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. I've worked with Ontario Hydro in its internal human resource development group, and since 1976 I've had my own independent training company called Edutran Training Services. Until relatively recently, one of my major clients in fact has been various government ministries.

So I say all that just to show that I'm someone who's been working out there in the field on both sides, and I don't want to be in any sort of position saying that the private sector is perfect or the private sector is the answer for the future. I also would like to recognize that some very good things have happened in the formal education sector. I think, for instance, the establishment of the colleges of applied arts and technology in this province was one of the high water marks of educational-training development in the province. So I just want to clarify that I'm not attacking any particular sector, nor am I unrealistically supporting any one sector and saying that sector is the answer.

However, I do strongly feel that, as a number of you have already mentioned, all our strengths should be brought together in more of a synergistic way, and we should be pushed aside from fighting each other in too many areas. There's too big a job that needs to be done out there.

We're well aware that productivity is lagging in this province. We're well aware that there are financial problems. Tying those together, we know that a lot of the answers lie with productivity. A lot of the answers therefore lie with more and more effective training, which brings me to one of my points and is a concern in all of the OTAB-related

documentation, including the proposed Bill 96. As I see it, the word "training" is thrown around a lot, but it is never really very specifically defined.

The danger there is that in doing that, you end up with an Alice-in-Wonderland approach which says the word means whatever I intend it to mean. So it may help requirements for productivity in industry. Then again, it may help teaching in a classroom in some sort of institution. It may help another group. We don't know for sure, and I would strongly urge putting in a little more definition on that term so that the right kinds of training are conducted in the right places for the right reasons. Whether they're conducted in the end by the formal sector, by the informal sector, by the public sector, by the private sector, that should be secondary, but certainly all should have an invitation and all should have a positive role to play. I don't think this should be turned into a battle land between one group versus the other.

In particular, I look at objective number 16 in section 4 of the act as it now stands. This section says, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems."

There's been quite an investment in infrastructure over many years. In fact, the first piece of legislation in Upper Canada in 1799 actually dealt with training. It was an act regarding orphans. The solution at the time was to help orphans by providing a means for them to be apprenticed out. Through the 19th century there were various other pieces of legislation relating to what we today could call training. So there's an honourable history there.

However, in the French version it becomes a little stronger. It says: "Chercher à renforcer, dans le cadre de ses activités, les systèmes d'éducation public de l'Ontario."

With my French, which I don't claim to be at full bilingual level, I interpret that to mean something a little bit more, saying we're going to use this to reinforce the publicly structured and publicly funded system. You have the power to do what you think is right, but just be careful there that it doesn't become the overwhelming objective and that it doesn't end up running over what you really want to have happen, which is much better development for the workforce in Ontario in order to meet the needs of the developing economy in this decade.

The Chair: Thank you. We have 60 seconds per caucus.

Mr Ramsay: In your very different presentations, you really reinforce the point that if we were to proceed with training in Ontario we need to bring everybody in and we do not need to give preference to any of the groups. In fact, how strongly you feel about the emphasis and the priority given towards the publicly funded systems is going to be destructive to the partnership that the government wants to try to create.

I will be moving next week that all the trainers should be at the seat of OTAB, including private trainers, community trainers, colleges, universities and schools boards. I think everybody should be there to bring people together. I'm also going to be making an amendment that will scratch 16 out of the legislation so that there's no prejudice

towards any of the trainers but that OTAB's mandate is to seek the very best training available in Ontario.

Mr Carr: I won't have much time, and I wish I did. I just want the committee to know that Arleen has contacted me and we've worked on many projects together, and I don't think you realize how much work went into this presentation. She has prepared long and hard in putting this together and I think has brought a different perspective to try to show you what happens with the board of education and how they are literally competing with her and putting her out of business. I hope that came through. I wish we had more than a minute.

I can't force the government, but I hope that it will take into consideration the fact that they have both come down here, along with a councillor, and put a great deal of time into this, and since we didn't have much time to get into some of the questions, that some of them that haven't been answered can maybe be answered individually with Arleen, because I know that both of you put together a lot of work. I thank you for it, and I thank you for all the information. I did want the committee to know that, because there has been a tremendous amount of effort put into it, and we thank you. I just wish we had a lot more time.

Mr Marchese: I have one question in two parts for Robyn and Arleen. First of all, the question you pose about training not being defined is an interesting one, and I wonder what your definition is in terms of what training should be all about. What are the right reasons and what are the wrong reasons?

For Arleen, for the makeup of this board, as you know, there are eight people representing employers, eight representing labour and six representing different important groups: women, minorities, people with disabilities, francophones and educator-trainers. Do you see this board as being comprised of 50 or perhaps 60 or 70 people in order to include all the people that Mr Ramsay wants to include?

Mr Ramsay: Twenty-five.

1500

Mr Marchese: Twenty-five? So three more. It would be interesting to see who you would want to represent. So what would you recommend in terms of who should be represented there? How do we do this to make it manageable?

Ms Reinsborough: Do you want me to answer?

Mr Marchese: Yes, please.

Ms Reinsborough: I would like to see as many people as possible on this board. I've worked on committees; I know that the more people you get on there, the more chaos you have. But also, if you leave people off, you're never going to get people who are happy with what you have put forth. Remember that every person on that board is going to have his own agenda. They'll all admit they don't, but they will have their own agenda. So if the private sector is not represented, the private sector will have no voice. I'm not saying that it should be loaded with private sector, I'm not saying public sector should not be on it and I'm not saying community trainers, because I think we all have a different way to train, we all have something to offer and you should be able to listen to us

all. I don't care how big it is; it has to be done. That's my opinion.

The Chair: I thank you kindly for coming here. Do you want to have the final word?

Ms Reinsborough: That was the first part. He asked a two-part question.

Ms Peterson: Mr Marchese asked a question on training.

The Chair: Quite right. The problem is that he took so long asking his question that he barely left you time for an answer, but I am going to let you have the last word. Go ahead.

Ms Peterson: To go with the question on training, I go back to the American Society for Training and Development's definition at least 10 years ago, which was to say that training is any activity directed at the specific needs for a particular job.

To me, and from a lot of the intent that I see in OTAB, you don't want to just address that; you want to address what I would call a more generalized level of training which is in support of that. But the final training for a particular job that actually exists is absolutely critical in the whole process.

The Chair: Thank you both. We appreciate your coming here. I'm confident that Mr Carr has accurately outlined what was a great deal of effort put into the preparation for this, and we are grateful to you. It was, I'm sure, an enlightening presentation for this committee, and we trust you'll keep in touch.

Ms Reinsborough: We will.

The Chair: Take care. Have a safe trip back home.

The next participant is the Association of Iroquois and Allied Indians, if their spokespeople would come forward and have a seat.

KITCHENER-WATERLOO-GUELPH TRAINING ADVISORY COUNCIL

The Chair: Notwithstanding that, there is the Kitchener-Waterloo-Guelph Training Advisory Council, which is prepared to pinch hit and start at least 30 minutes earlier than it would have otherwise. Have a seat, please. Tell us who you are, your position, and tell us what you will. We have 30 minutes. Please try to save the second 15 minutes for questions and exchanges. Mr Marchese will have some for you.

Mr Walt Bathe: I hope so. Good afternoon. My name is Walt Bathe. As you already know, I represent the K-W-G Training Advisory Council, and I am an operational manager of a small Ontario business. My involvement with training and training councils goes back to 1978 when I was the manager of a major employer in Stratford associated with the automotive business which was involved in worldwide trading in the heavy truck parts industry. I was involved in training when the federal government first allotted significant funds for local training supervised by the CEIC.

It is my intention to present our views as an organization as well as some personal views on the mandate of OTAB, small business involvement in training, unorganized labour involvement in training, private and public trainers and volunteerism in the training experience.

The act to establish OTAB indicates that this body of 22 members will be expected to deal with all of the diverse areas of our province by getting together at least once every two months and, with input from staff, making decisions about training needs and related funding for all these areas. This seems to me to be an impossible task for such a group. It would make more sense to have decisions made at the local level which would be put forward in a ranked order-of-priority basis to this body for final approval.

At the initial meeting at which the federal government outlined the Canadian Labour Force Development Board and its strategy, this bottom-up approach was advanced and accepted by all of us who were attending. At the same meeting, it was advanced that labour would be broadly represented at all levels and not dominated by one strong labour voice.

As we read Bill 96, it appears that the OTAB board will be responsible for all development of local boards and sectoral groups yet unnamed. Our experience with training in our communities is that large business or large sectors have always been able to look after themselves when it comes to accessing government funds. It is therefore imperative that a strong local board which represents a majority of those requiring training be in the forefront of decision-making, and that OTAB should only be a conduit which would filter and ensure that adequate training is available, and to ensure accessibility and accountability of the local board.

Small business involvement: Statistics in the area of Kitchener, Waterloo and Guelph point to the indisputable fact that small business dominates in the area of employment. Further, it is a fact that these same small businesses are where the majority of the workplace training takes place. Further, again, it is evident that these trained people from small businesses invariably are recruited by large companies where they are more likely to meet their personal goals and self-actualization. This, in my opinion, is evolutionary and very natural. The small business people complain about this, as they are constantly required to recruit and expend on training.

We realize this will never change. Our concern, however, under a revised system of training and therefore training decisions, is that big business and big labour will be the ultimate decision-makers and that small business will be forgotten and ignored. Our organization, the KWG training advisory board, has been driven by small business and therefore has attracted a leadership of small business people over the years.

Please do what is necessary at the OTAB level to ensure that small business is not forgotten and to ensure that employees of small business are not relegated to a lower class of worker through big labour-training domination in our community. Their needs are also important to our future as a nation.

May I digress slightly from these issues and explain what dominates the concerns of many small manufacturing concerns in our area. It is, without question, the apparent interference and increasing presence of government in our everyday lives as business people. The Occupational Health and Safety Act, the workplace hazardous materials

information system, Bill 40, and the most recent rumours of employment equity and pay equity issues, are making most of us very nervous if not paranoid—I mean that—in some cases.

There is some rumour that OTAB will be introducing a training tax to aid in its funding. Small business must train to stay alive. A multiskilled workforce is a prerequisite to success in small business. The problems of a training tax introduction to small business is that, although we train constantly, we do not necessarily account for the training properly. A training tax would put further pressure on small business to appease Big Brother, the tax collector. We urge that this regressive tax not be considered.

Unorganized labour representation: As mentioned earlier, the majority of labour in our communities which we represent are not affiliated with organized labour as we know it. Approximately 70% of the labour force in Kitchener, Waterloo and Guelph either are employed in small businesses or work within a structure of in-house association. May I digress there for a quick second. I was told the other day that less than 10% of the workforce in that community in the private sector belong to organized labour. We are therefore quite concerned that this majority of workers is to be underrepresented at the levels of decision-making.

In the representations that have been made to the travelling consultant groups, this point has been increasingly presented. To this date, no acceptable answer has been forthcoming that we are aware of. To respond by saying that the equity groups will adequately represent them or that organized labour will represent them is not possible. Both of these groups are operating in an environment of bureaucracy. They will either passionately defend their constituents or will make decisions which will best serve their own needs. This is not unusual nor unexpected, nor are we condemning this attitude. We are, however, concerned about those unorganized labour people who, by the composition of OTAB and therefore local boards, will tend to be forgotten or ignored.

1510

We do not have an adequate solution to this problem but believe that the present structure of providing training in our communities would be able to deal with this concern. Perhaps the recommendation by the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario would solve the issue. They have recommended that public nominations to OTAB and LTABs be made and that nominations should have a basis of competence, knowledge and experience in the training and adjustment areas.

KWG training advisory board has over the past nine years been involved in many training causes. Our experience in dealing with delivering agencies has been successful with private trainers and public institutions.

There appears to be a move to mandate the utilization of public training institutions through the creation of OTAB. This would be totally unacceptable to the present participants in our training areas. The reasons are legion: cost-effectiveness, availability of adequate facilities and training equipment, travel time, instruction times and capabilities of instructors, to name a few. Presently, over 70% of the funds are spent with publicly funded trainers, mostly the colleges.

As we progress into a more sophisticated environment, these issues become more convoluted as specialities will be necessary in equipment and instructors. Let's not force the taxpaying public into a position of shelling out more funds than are necessary to support the training culture.

Training is best accomplished in an atmosphere of trust and partnerships. The partnership issue is presently working in areas of specialized equipment within our many areas of influence. Examples include college and private enterprise ventures as well as employee groups and training body partnerships where equipment is specialized and expensive. Mandating public sector training facilities is a very bad and unacceptable idea.

My last point, and probably the one that I would like to make most clear, is the volunteerism issue. The present system of delivering training within 57 communities in this province is driven by a legion of volunteers right now. This system has been in place for over a decade and has been stimulated by the addition of government directives, mostly federal. In our grouping—Kitchener, Waterloo, Guelph—over 120 individuals have been volunteering their time and talents to this end.

The volunteer nature of these individuals includes the identification of training needs by groupings, the initializing of the courses to be offered, the design and in many cases the writing of the course outline and curriculum, as well as setting the criteria for the trainees, evaluating the trainers and the results.

Perhaps as in many organizations, professional people have been trained to accomplish these tasks. In the training area, however, the need for firsthand exposure to a discipline on an ongoing, year-to-year basis is imperative. This obviously insures valuable, updated inputs into the training.

With the introduction of OTAB and subsequent local boards, it would appear that this important resource will be lost and the development time wasted.

Please ensure that this development of training does not totally become a top-down, government-mandated, bureaucratically driven organization. Involve those people who wish to contribute on the basis of doing something for free. Believe me, it is not only good for the soul, it is very important for the long-term, unselfish success of the training initiative.

In review, may I close by summarizing this presentation as follows: Please be aware of the importance of the mandate of OTAB. Top-down directives will not move business people to train. It must be locally initiated. Small businesses need to train to stay alive and grow. Ensure they have a voice. Unorganized labourers need to be represented at the discussion and decision-making levels. Ensure that the training is the very best that money can buy, with the best instructors, as well as the most sophisticated equipment. Volunteerism is extremely valuable to the training for the long term.

Thank you very much.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you. Questions? Mr Turnbull.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you very much. I apologize I wasn't here for the whole of your presentation. The words that ring so true to me are the question of representation of unorganized labour on the board. We know that the vast

majority of all labour in Ontario is unorganized, yet we see overwhelmingly the intent is that the representation on the board should be organized labour. I wonder if you could expand on your comments a little more.

Mr Bathe: Not a lot. I think the problem, as I see it, is that unorganized labour is unorganized. In most cases, the representation is being made by the small business person who is most involved in having those people trained for the good of themselves and also for the good of small businesses in the communities that are involved. As I say in my presentation, I'm not sure that I have an answer on how to deal with that. Perhaps a nomination process is the only way I could think to make that happen.

Mr Turnbull: I've asked this question to several people and there have been some quite good answers actually.

Mr Bathe: I'm sure.

Mr Turnbull: People who believe there are adequate ways of addressing this. There's no doubt about it that in Canada and in Ontario we don't have enough dedication to training and we certainly need to sharpen the focus on training. It has been suggested in discussions with other people who have come forward to give their views that the trouble is that businesses have failed in their duty to train in many industries.

One of the aspects is that it's always suggested that Germany is the ideal model, yet in Germany there is a certain quid pro quo. You get apprenticeship programs in Germany where there are very low amounts of money paid to the apprentices during that time. So to the extent that there is a commitment for a certain length of service from that employee, they will get training and they will get released to attend school during the work week, and at the end of the day the person who is being trained is partly paying for it, the employer is partly paying for it and the government is partly paying for it. That seems to be quite a good model.

I suppose we have the problem here that traditionally organized labour particularly has demanded very high amounts of starting compensation for the workers, and businesses have accepted that, and have on the other hand not spent as much money as perhaps they should have in training. Could you comment on that?

Mr Bathe: I believe the situation should be one where there is some compensation tied to additional training. That doesn't necessarily mean that you start the employees off at a subsistence wage, but they should be started at an acceptable wage, and you reward them in training as they upgrade themselves, with your help, because there has to be a commitment on both sides as I mentioned earlier. The commitment has to be that the employer is willing to reward. In our specific small industry, which is a fabrication company, as the workers come on board and gain more welding tickets, as it were, or more training, they are given more reward in the form of money.

Mr Turnbull: In the experience in Germany, where you certainly have a high cost of living, higher than Canada, an apprentice is typically paid between \$575 a month and \$650 a month, which is vastly less than anybody who's employed here. If employees were prepared to work for

somewhat less, and I'm not suggesting putting it at the German level, do you not think more companies would be in a position to be able to spend on training?

Mr Bathe: I think for sure, if that were part of the training culture that we accept. It's very difficult in our industry, for instance, to hire a summer employee from the high school system for a small wage these days. They are expecting \$7.50 or \$8 an hour to start. Frankly, it's very difficult for someone from a small business like we are in to be able to do that, to pay that higher wage.

1520

Mr Farnan: I want to thank you for your presentation. I didn't always agree with what you had to say, but I was struck by your dedication and commitment to training. I think that's true of all of the people I've been involved with in the Cambridge area who are involved with the CITCs; there is this extraordinary dedication. I know you probably have some of the reservations that my local people have in terms of the delay in the development of the local boards, but what I do admire across the board is your willingness to participate and even to financially support the local training board facilitation committees. That's to be commended.

I know we have to have differences. This is going to be a tremendous compromise as we all work together with our different visions and try to meld them together into one cohesive, constructive, strong approach to training. But what I did admire about what you had to say was, "Let's keep the best of what's there."

Before you answer that question, I want to say to you that I know the minister has enthusiastically endorsed the work of CITCs. He's been so high on your contribution. We need you, and we look forward to working with you. Can you give us a bit of advice as to how we can keep the best and how we can incorporate that into the new system of local boards as we move down the road together?

Mr Bathe: As I mentioned in my presentation, I was one of the few, I guess, fortunate people who sat in on the presentation when the Canadian labour force development strategy was put forward. I was the chairman of the K-W-G TAC, and I went back to my committee at that point heartily endorsing and supporting the concept, because I think the concept is very good.

I guess our major concern is that you're going to throw out the baby with the bath water. Our group is there; our group is ready and willing to be involved. We don't really care what you call us. You don't have to call us CITCs; you don't have to call us training advisory councils. That doesn't mean anything. What is important to our local group and to me and to the organizations that I have some affiliation with is that it's effective, that it does something worthwhile. Consequently, I think there should be a melding of the systems. We have trained staff people who have been doing very good work within the community of Kitchener-Waterloo-Guelph. Our relationship with the college has been very good. I'm concerned that those kinds of things are going to get thrown away.

Mr Farnan: We have to do our utmost to ensure that we keep the very best. I do believe that the cream rises to

the surface. I can't speak out of personal knowledge in the Kitchener-Waterloo area, but I know the kinds of individuals in the Cambridge area. These individuals are committed to training, whatever the model, and they will be there in partnership with all of the players, as I have no doubt that you will be. Whatever your reservations, I know that you're going to bring your expertise, knowledge and commitment, and working together, we're going to make this a success.

Mr Bathe: I certainly hope so.

Mr Offer: Thank you for your presentation. As we're winding down our hearings, you should not be surprised that the points you have brought forward today are points that have been brought forward by others in a very real way, speaking, as you have, about their experiences in their communities and sharing with the committee how this organization called OTAB can be improved in order to really meet the challenges of the day. So I thank you for doing that.

We will see next week, when we go through the clause-by-clause stage, whether the government has been listening to the concerns that you and others have brought forward. That will be the proof, and we will see whether they will have any amendments to address some of the very real problems of this legislation.

I want to ask you a question on the local boards. I take it as a given from your experience that this OTAB will succeed or fail on the basis of the strength of the local boards.

Mr Bathe: Definitely.

Mr Offer: I also take it that you would like to see the establishment of local boards in the legislation; maybe not exactly where they're going to be established, but in fact in legislation that they will be established.

Mr Bathe: Definitely. With regard to the community size or community makeup, I don't think that's terribly important. I really think the important thing is that there be a ground-level initiative in the training effort.

Mr Offer: I think your position in response to these questions is absolutely so reasonable that there just does not seem to me to be any reason why the government cannot prepare or in fact support amendments which will call for mandatorily creating the establishment of local boards. If we are truly going to reflect the community's needs in the area of training, then it has to come from the community. It can't come from some other organization.

Mr Bathe: You can't mandate training.

Mr Offer: I thank you for sharing your position with us today.

The Vice-Chair: I'd like to thank the Kitchener-Waterloo-Guelph Training Advisory Council and you, sir, for appearing before the committee and so adequately putting forward the views of your organization. You've made a very valuable contribution to the committee, and we appreciate you taking the time to be with us here today. Thank you very much.

Mr Bathe: Thank you for your time.

The Vice-Chair: The next delegation is about two members short, so we are recessed until 3:45.

The committee recessed at 1528 and resumed at 1550.

ONTARIO MARCH OF DIMES

The Chair: It's 3:50, and we're going to resume. The next participant is the Ontario March of Dimes. If they would please come forward and have seats in front of microphones and tell us who they are and what their positions are with the March of Dimes and proceed with telling us what they want they to tell us, leaving the last 15 minutes for questions and exchanges.

Mr Duncan Read: May we start now?

The Chair: Yes, sir, by all means.

Mr Read: My name is Duncan Read. I am the chairman of the government relations committee of the March of Dimes and a member of the board of directors of the March of Dimes of Ontario. With me are Andria Spindel, the executive director of the March of Dimes, and Jim Grant, the government relations coordinator of the March of Dimes.

I heard your request to take 15 minutes and leave the rest of the time for questions. If I am still talking at the end of 15 minutes, I have not done my job well. We will try and be done sooner to leave more opportunity for questions and dialogue.

The first essential thing for me to do is to thank the committee for giving us the opportunity to appear, and to remind you, as I don't read the brief but sort of walk you through parts of it, that the March of Dimes is appearing here both as an employer and as a trainer. We strongly feel that there is a unique perspective of agencies such as ours that provide specialized training and employment for people with disabilities that has been overlooked through the consultation process, and we wish to register that view today.

We understand the thrust of OTAB, and we congratulate the government of Ontario for undertaking this comprehensive restructuring of the labour force development system, but we believe that it is crucial that groups like the disabled, which have been historically disadvantaged in the labour market, are given the best possible training.

It is our view that our long record of practical and technical experience in working with employers, trainers, educators and people with disabilities to develop vocational and pre-vocational programs and essential support services, materials and products which remove workplace barriers can be of very significant assistance in this very specialized area to key labour market partners. As province-wide employers and one of the largest employers of people with disabilities in the province, we think we have a unique view to offer.

Historically, society has given this a low priority. This is particularly true as it applies to people with disabilities. Public attitudes have meant inequitable education opportunities, little or no access to necessary job accommodation and inadequate training and retraining opportunities. The historical lack of societal recognition and the dearth of public dollars to address these problems is precisely why organizations like the March of Dimes came into existence some 40 years ago.

The programs we were initially able to deliver have met with some criticism in some sectors. They fell short, but we improved as we went along and we believe that

with limited resources we have been able to develop a range of effective and sophisticated market-related and individually needs-focused training programs. Appendix 3 of our brief details some of those programs.

The March of Dimes was founded in 1951. Its original mandate was to find a cure for polio. That was accomplished with the Salk vaccine, and the March of Dimes shifted its emphasis to the treatment and rehabilitation, initially, of adults who were experiencing the residual effects of polio. Over time, the population served by the March of Dimes has expanded to include all adults with physical disabilities in the province. Our mission statement very simply is, "To assist adults with physical disabilities to lead meaningful and dignified lives."

Ninety per cent of our funding presently supports three programs: assistive devices, employment services and independent living assistance. There are over a million people across the province who fit into the category of disabled adults, and the list includes everything from spinal chord injuries, brain injuries, and a whole variety of diseases that are listed here—multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy and people like myself who are old polios. In appendix 4, attached to our submission, the programs are explained in some detail.

In addition to those services, the organization has a strong history of issue advocacy. We have engaged in consumer advocacy and coalition-based efforts, and some things we've done on our own in areas like employment equity, human rights, transportation, and indeed, sir, automobile insurance, employment and housing. The concerns of the disabled are our fundamental reason for being or *raison d'être*.

I'd like to turn quickly if I could to the seven recommendations that begin on page 7 of our brief. They deal with things that we would like done for OTAB and that we would like you to consider amending with respect to OTAB.

We would like the voluntary not-for-profit sector to be included on the local boards as employers. The March of Dimes has 1,000 employees across the province. Similar organizations like the CNIB and the Canadian Hearing Society would employ the same number of people across the province. They're significant labour forces that have a unique perspective; employers of significant numbers of people.

As employers, we do a lot to provide job accommodation and technical support skills, upgrading and retraining. New technologies that are enhancing the competitiveness of people with disabilities in the workplace, up-to-date knowledge of these technologies and their applications will continue to be critical to our employees. It's essential that our employees are eligible for training under the local board criteria.

It is essential, secondly, that the March of Dimes and agencies like ours should be included in the strategies developed by the local boards as providers of essential support services to employers seeking to hire people with disabilities.

We believe, thirdly, that we should be included in the strategies developed by the local board as deliverers of specialized training, where integrated training is unavailable through traditional mechanisms or when sensory and

systemic limitations make fully integrated and specialized training inappropriate.

We believe that the accessibility of all training programs to people with disabilities must be guaranteed. Funding must be designated to ensure the accessibility of training programs, whether it be through physical access, interpretive services or any other measure which would ensure that the training is barrier-free. It is not enough, as the current OTAB proposals suggest, to endeavour to ensure access. A strong commitment must be made by this government, we suggest, to fund equal access, because if you can't get there, you can't get trained.

1600

We would ask for input into representation on the local boards. It must come from the local level and there must be equal access to the local board to people living both in rural and urban areas. We recognize that the composition of the local board should reflect the diverse needs of these two populations. We also suggest that the four target populations, if you will, should have equal access to the local boards, that their separate and differing needs have to be developed in the strategies of each of the local boards and that the local boards must be mandated to develop training strategies which reflect future market needs.

To conclude, we believe our organization and others like us, like the Canadian Hearing Society and the CNIB, are among the not-for-profit employers who should be included in the process, because we believe we have a specialized expertise that would be useful on the local boards.

We know, as employers, that the March of Dimes provides job accommodation and technical support for our employees. We provide ongoing skills upgrading and retraining to ensure our employees meet steadily increasing standards of professionalism. We urge the government to recognize our status as employers under OTAB.

We also believe that the government should remain true to its commitment to link competitiveness with a fair and just society. If persons with disabilities are to be truly competitive in the workforce, they and those dedicated to training and employment in this specialized area must be heard clearly and consistently. Therefore, through our inclusion on local boards as employers, the government can take steps to reverse the disadvantage in employment which people with disabilities have suffered historically. We call on the government to take this opportunity.

My colleagues and I would be pleased to answer any questions.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr Wiseman: It's nice to see you here. I'd like to congratulate you. Duncan is from my home community of Ajax and has put an awful lot of effort into the community.

We've heard a number of presentations from the disabled community which have outlined some of the difficulties that disabled individuals have had in terms of being trained, having access to accommodation, equipment and so on, and I think it's an important presentation that you've made today. I particularly like the notion that perhaps some of the seats that are reserved for the business community should include seats from you as an employer as well.

I have to say this to you. Over the last little while we've been hearing a lot of people who've asked for places on the boards. I'm not saying this is your group, but what I'm trying to get to is, how do we guarantee—we can't have a huge board, although some people have recommended as many as 50 on this board. My goal is to make sure that the objectives of OTAB are clearly achieved, that is, the objectives of training and having training that is relevant to the needs and to the job market as it exists now and in the future.

I'm not so much interested in how many and what the balance of the board is as much as in the kind of person we need to have on the board who will be able to identify those needs and those trends as objectively and accurately as possible. I'm just wondering if you have any idea what kind of person should be on these boards.

Ms Andria Spindel: Let me attempt to answer that from the point of view of an agency manager, having been very intimately involved in the preparation of this brief in consultation with the two other organizations that are mentioned here.

We feel it's a bit shocking to think that a very large sector of the community of Ontario has been neglected in all the different sectoral groups, that is, the non-profit organization. We're not here to speak specifically for disabled people or about what the individual disabled person needs, because we know they are speaking for themselves and will do advocacy on their own behalf. In fact, there are times when there is a controversy, if you like, between the agency service sector and the disabled community, so far be it for us to try to give that particular perspective.

What we find really shocking is that we haven't been identified as a sector or participant at all. There's the training sector, which is the identified training organizations like schools, colleges, universities, and they may be unhappy, but they're identified. There's the employer or business community in the profit-making world and they've been identified. We understand the target groups have been identified, but there are tens of thousands of people who work in the non-profit business community, and it's a growing service sector.

When people look at where job growth is, it is in fact in our sector. We have experienced quadrupling, albeit some of it's because of government funding, because there's growth in the provision of services to disabled people. But it's going to continue. It's a reality. So if we have 1,000 employees today, we might well have 2,000 employees in the not-too-distant future.

We need to be part of the planning, and we are an experienced employer when it comes to dealing with charter groups. If you want to have knowledge and experience on the boards, then I think you should include us—as emphasized here—as an employer willing to do something. We've demonstrated the willingness to do something. There are many businesses that are becoming acquainted with employment equity. We have a 20- or 30-year history and some very good data to demonstrate that we have done that.

The combined workforce of the three organizations that did this analysis together is that we have between 20% and 28% of our employee group with disabilities, so we

think that's knowledge and expertise to bring to the table. We aren't arguing that we are just trainers or that we're the consumer group. We hire people and we'll grow, I suspect, as a force in the economy which I think needs to be there.

I would say that if you're looking at what should be the makeup, it's people not only with an interest in training but with a commitment to the employment equity situation and with some experience of how it works and when it doesn't work, what is it that will help a disabled person to move into the community and what will keep them there. We've had enough experience to know where the failings are as well. We know how hard it is, we know how hard it is to convince others to do it, and we know when it doesn't work you have to fire people. We've done that. I think that's a very exceptional experience being missed in this whole process.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much for your presentation. I think it has given a good overview of the issues that are important to you. Particularly, I want to say Duncan outlined very clearly not only how much can be gained but, as others have brought up here, how much is lost when the needs of people with disabilities and others who have historically been left out of the training sphere, the economic sphere, aren't met.

I want to go back though to just how we do include that experience. You make the suggestion that local boards reflect your experience. As you know, the local boards are mentioned in the legislation, that they will be set up in consultation with the federal government and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, as well as OTAB, when it is formed, and the provincial government.

Given those perspectives, I'm sure the idea is that the community will be represented on the boards, and as you point out, with the strong representation of agencies like the March of Dimes throughout Ontario, there is a place there on boards at the community level for your participation, where you can bring up the issues you've mentioned as far as your experience in meeting the needs of people with disabilities and the programs you have run in the past.

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Ms Spindel: I think I understand one of the issues you're drawing our attention to, which is that the bill speaks to the governing structure and makes some reference to the local structure, so how do we relate to the governing structure?

We really don't think it's necessarily appropriate to say that there should be the non-profit service sector on OTAB as well unless we were to be recognized as one of the employers or one of the trainers or whatever as opposed to being excluded altogether. In other words, we could easily become part of an identified sectoral group that's already there. We aren't asking for special status. So that's one option.

The other is that there is an infrastructure that is spoken of for subgroups, advisory bodies, envelopes, councils; I couldn't remember what they're called. It's also reasonable to think that we might play a technical advisory role to those bodies. Although it wasn't specifically recommended here in the deliberations that we've had internally,

we have tried to come up with appropriate answers to those kinds of questions, like how we could bring an infusion of expertise, and that might be a legitimate role. If we were asked, we would be more than happy to provide consultation.

I guess I have to state that we really believe it almost needs to be identified up front that there will be an advisory body or there will be a technical support group or whatever, because as we've gone around the province to all the local consultations, we've recognized over and over again the absence of recognition of what we know. In other words, nobody is saying, "It's good that you know it and you're willing to share it." Everybody says, "That's an interesting perspective, but you're not really the disabled, so you can't really tell us what they need." We're saying, "Right, but we can tell you how they will interact with you because we've got the technology, the interpreter services, the adaptive computer boards."

We know how to buy these things, how to install them and how to train to use them. We could teach that to other people. If it's community colleges, fine; if it's business, fine. But if you don't ask, it isn't going to be there. When we think of the wealth of knowledge and experience that we've got that isn't being called upon, we get very frustrated.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation today. I was going through your recommendations, and I'm very glad that you put so much importance on the local boards because I also believe that's where the delivery of service will really happen. It's unfortunate, as you mentioned, that the legislation only just mentions local boards and basically OTAB may designate local training and adjustment boards.

I will be introducing next week a section that speaks to local board establishment and how that should happen, because I think you're right when you say that it's local agencies that are going to have to become a partner on the local boards and be brought in for sure, because I think that's where all the specialized training's going to happen. I'm going to be addressing that. I think that's very important.

It's our understanding that of almost all of the 150 presentations we've had, the government is not prepared to move one amendment to this legislation. We will see next week, but the Liberal caucus is certainly going to be doing that, and we hope we can get some of them through to address your needs.

On recommendation 7, I'd like you to clarify something for me. You say the four target populations must have equal access to local boards. What do you mean by the four target populations?

Ms Spindel: Pardon?

Mr Ramsay: You mention in recommendation 7 the four target populations.

Ms Spindel: You're asking who are the four?

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

Ms Spindel: We're speaking really to the bill itself having defined visible minorities, women, disabled persons and aboriginals/francophones; I'm not sure which group is being referenced most of the time.

Mr Ramsay: It's the equity group.

Ms Spindel: It's the equity groups, and our concern is really probably best emphasized in number 4, which is that we're looking for the bill to be strengthened around the issue of ensuring access. So if there was an amendment somebody was going to bring, I guess we'd have to underline that as maybe the most important one to us. We hope, in the long run, as I said, to be involved in the delivery, consultation and design of programs etc, but if access is left optional, we're very concerned that it just won't happen.

Mr Ramsay: That's an interesting point you bring up, that you would like to be called upon to work on design and delivery of services. I agree with you; you're the people who have the expertise in your particular field. The legislation says that OTAB should be designing, delivering and promoting this. I think OTAB would be the wrong party; OTAB should be the facilitator. It should identify the needs through having good representation in the community, and then go out in the community and identify those people who would deliver it, and obviously you would be the appropriate people to deliver your specialized training. So I hope that happens.

The Chair: Before we go to Mr Turnbull, I want to make note of how pleased I am to see Duncan Read here. He is very familiar with the corridors of Queen's Park and has been for a number of years. I did not know, sir, of your capacity with March of Dimes, but I'm not surprised. You're obviously a hardworking and committed person, and you individually, in a number of roles, have always been eager to provide assistance to this and previous governments. They haven't always done the right thing by you, I suppose as recently as your recent appearance in front of the so-called automobile insurance reform committee, where your contribution was an exceptionally valuable one, as your contribution is today as a part of this panel.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you very much for your presentation. I know how important your work is, and I think your focus is appropriate in the sense that you're saying there should be more concentration on the LTAB aspect of this. I guess my party is concerned that this will become some huge bureaucratic nightmare, and we want to make sure that the money is appropriately spent where it's going to help the most people.

I certainly would be interested in any comments that you may have with respect to people who are disabled as a result of auto accidents, as I'm sure Mr Kormos would be delighted to hear any comments you'd have, but I particularly want to hear how you would structure the board of an LTAB in terms of the kind of representation balance that you think is appropriate.

Ms Spindel: I think that we're looking for the local boards to, in many ways, replicate the OTAB board, but believe it need not necessarily be limited by what would appear to be a somewhat limiting definition of positions. I agree we may not want 50, but it does seem like the provincial board has a fairly finite number, and it may be almost too tight for any manoeuvring. So it's our understanding that potentially the local boards could be larger,

could have wider representation, and that would be very important to us.

It would be very important that there was some effort made to make them consistent, one from another, and I understand that everything is locally determined or that there is a perception that this is going to reflect the community. Therefore, it needs to also respond to the commonalities as much as to the differences in communities and to the need to look at standards.

One of the things that's come up in our discussion is the need to ensure strong accountability of the local boards to the provincial structure, and I don't know if I'm safe in using words such as "standardization" or "standards" for accountability. But in our internal discussions we've tried to come up with some rational models for how this thing might work, and we feel somewhat concerned that there could be a lot of duplication and, as you said, it could be a large, bureaucratic something that could get out of hand if there isn't a recognized, common, accountable, reinforced structure that has, in some ways, a fairly defined common purpose.

I have some very strong personal comments I could make about how that might happen, because I run a provincial organization and we have 12 regions and we work very hard at common standards and common accounting and common criteria for evaluating the importance of this, that or the other thing, and we think it works very well. We think the benefit of that is that people within our system can recognize one another across the system and understand what the other is doing. If they're all very different, while it sounds nice and pat about local community and local identity, you lose something. You can't get in touch with each other if you haven't got something in common in some structures and in some principles that you're working with. In our case, it's easy to manage; we're only talking about 1,000 people. But we have concerns about more variation in the system than is really worthwhile.

Mr Turnbull: I wonder if you'd just like to tangentially address this question of what might happen with respect to your target group as a result of the auto insurance changes.

Ms Spindel: I think Duncan might.

Mr Read: To be clear, are you asking whether we expect we will get more clientele out of it?

Mr Turnbull: No, I'm saying there are some implications for the people's financial wellbeing, and I'm asking how they will relate to your groups as a result of these changes that the government is proposing.

Mr Read: The legislation, whatever its merits or demerits, does not do a whole lot to encourage disabled people, people who are injured in auto accidents, to remain independent and function with dignified, meaningful lives. The legislation in that respect is totally flawed. It does not do anything, and there is a variety of reasons. The allowance for attendant care is far too slim. The inability of individuals who are disabled as a result of auto accidents to seek recovery for economic loss will make it more difficult for them to be retrained. In those respects, the legislation is flawed.

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It's also flawed with respect to those adults who are disabled right now who might have the good fortune to make above the ceiling in the legislation. The government's report so far has been, "Well, they can go out and buy disability insurance." That class of people can tell you, "I can't buy it," because the insurers don't understand what old folios are all about. So that's another area where the legislation is flawed. I see you looking askance, Mr Chairman. I know we're wandering a little off topic.

The Chair: Far be it from me to gag or censure participants in a democratic process. Mr Turnbull, one more minute.

Mr Turnbull: With respect to the structure of the OTAB board, as you know, there are two educators to be on the board, as its conceived, and you have an equal number of people from business and labour. Where would you see strengthening your representation on the board, under educators?

Ms Spindel: Interesting to choose either/or; we have felt all along that we are part of the training and education system, albeit not the system, if you like, that's credentialled, although one of the strengths of our organization and the other two that we've partnered with in some of our research is that we have worked very closely with the colleges to offer accredited programs. So we are developing very significant partnerships in the community, and in particular with George Brown College.

More recently, we've approached four or five community colleges in different parts of the province where we're offering computer training to people with disabilities, and the colleges have neither the expertise nor, apparently, the will to do that. So we've designed programs and they recognize and accredit them, and the people who enrol with us are students in the local college. We think that's a great advance. So we could well play a role there.

But we have argued that we are significant employers, and that's something that's new and different that perhaps should be thought of. It may not be that new to some of you, but thinking of where the growth is in the future, who the employers of the future are and how the people who we already employ can get the benefit of upgrading and training, not unlike any other technically sophisticated industry, we are that, and we have professional staff as well as support staff and technical staff. How do we keep them current if we cannot be part of the employer system? In other words, employers are being sought after.

I'll give you another example, the Ontario job training program to put together training plans to apply for money to bring people in-house and train them. But we're not an employer, so we can't even take advantage of that. Yet we have a very significant workforce, and it's a system, it's a sector, that is probably one of the more dynamic and growing forces in the economy: the non-profit, voluntary sector.

The Chair: Thank you. On behalf of the committee, and of course I join them in this, I thank the Ontario March of Dimes and specifically you as their spokesperson today, Ms Spindel, Mr Grant and Mr Read, for the presentation of a very important submission, one that is balanced and

well-thought-out. We are grateful to you and to the March of Dimes, and we recognize the importance of your participation. We trust that you'll be keeping in touch and observing this bill as it progresses through clause-by-clause. Please, be prepared or feel competent and capable of contacting individual members or the committee clerk if you have more to say about this matter. Thank you.

Ms Spindel: Thank you.

Mr Read: Thank you, Mr Chairman, and thank you, everyone. If I can make that offer reciprocal, if anybody on the committee wants any information from us at any time, please feel free to contact us.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Take care, people.

ONTARIO COALITION OF VISIBLE MINORITY WOMEN

The Chair: The next participant is the Ontario Coalition of Visible Minority Women. If their spokesperson would please come forward, have a seat in front of a microphone and tell us what their names are and, if they have any positions like coordinator and co-chair, what those positions are. We've got 30 minutes. We've got your written material. Please try to save the last 15 minutes, if you can, for questions and conversation. Go ahead.

Ms Elaine Prescod: Good evening, everyone. My name is Elaine Prescod. I'm the coordinator of the Ontario Coalition of Visible Minority Women. With me is Fleurette Osborne, chairperson of the Ontario Coalition of Visible Minority Women. The Coalition of Visible Minority Women wishes to thank you for the opportunity you have given us to address your committee on Bill 96, a bill which seeks to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, OTAB.

The Coalition of Visible Minority Women, commonly known as CVMW, was founded in October 1983, immediately after the visible minority women's conference on racism and sexism at work, cosponsored by the Ontario Human Rights Commission race relations division and the Ontario Women's Directorate. The coalition was organized as a mechanism to monitor follow-up to the recommendations made at that conference. Since that time, it has expanded to become a province-wide organization and participates as one of the founding members of the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women of Canada, commonly known as NOIMW.

Our organization is run by an elected chair, co-chair and standing committees on racism, housing, social justice, health issues, skills and language training. The overall mandate of the organization is to lobby and advocate for changes in legislation, policies and programs that impact on the lives of immigrant and visible minority women in the areas of housing, language, skills training, education, racism and sexism.

We are presently providing language instruction for newcomers to Canada, a program called LINC, sponsored by Employment and Immigration Canada, and a skills training program which provides instruction to prepare visible minority women who are foreign-trained and educated and plan to return to their careers as health care professionals.

The Coalition of Visible Minority Women commends and supports the government on the introduction of Bill 96, to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, which will establish an overall coordinated training system that will identify the training needs, meet the needs of the economy and of current and future workers.

Currently in Ontario, many women whom we serve have suffered job losses which will never be retrieved because of the impact of the recession, and more so the free trade agreement. We anticipate an increase of these casualties as a result of the forthcoming North American free trade agreement.

We believe and agree with the government that there needs to be some coordinated and integrated training system which will ensure that these women and others are trained and/or retrained for jobs that will be available, and not just training with no hope of meaningful employment.

There are also those among our members who bring with them skills and abilities when they emigrate to this country and especially to this province. Some specific programs are needed so that the economy may benefit from rather than waste these resources.

The structure and principles of the bill are sound but need some simplification and clarification. There are some sections where changes are needed in order to make the bill a more effective instrument. We are especially concerned that the major mechanisms of the bill will be placed under regulations.

We believe in the establishment of OTAB as a means of setting up policies and programs that are necessary for education and training if we are to compete in the global economy and have a place in the increasingly competitive labour market.

We believe that the changes we propose can be made without jeopardizing the achievement of an effective training and development system. The proposed amendments are not exhaustive or complete. They follow the bill section by section, and those sections to which we do not propose changes are not mentioned. The recommended changes will be set out, followed by reasons for the recommendation.

The following are some of the specific changes we would like to suggest.

Purposes: It is very necessary that the purposes of the act be clearly defined and stipulated. Therefore, we are making the following amendments:

(a) Amend to read, "To enable business and labour, together with educators, trainers and representatives of disadvantaged groups, particularly persons with disabilities, racial minorities, women"—and include—"and youth."

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A large number of young people have no skills at all, or just minimal skills, and there is high unemployment among this group. This does not augur well for the future of the country nor of the province. Since any training and development programs will have to include the youth, we submit they should be included as one of the stakeholders.

(c) Amend to read, "To integrate the principles of access and equity..."

This wording is very weak. These principles must be integral aspects of the development process and program if

it is to be effective. It is not enough to acknowledge their existence or validity. They must be conscientiously incorporated into the process and the system.

Definitions: We need a new definition for reference committees and for local training and adjustment board councils. These are integral parts of the OTAB structure and should be defined in the act. We recommend these be added to section 2 of the bill.

Section 4, Objects: This section of the legislation must clearly set out what is the expected mandate of OTAB. It is for this reason that we are making the following changes and amendments:

Amend paragraph 4(1)5 to read, "To ensure that publicly funded..." and delete "seek to." If public funds are to be used, it is imperative that they are used for the purposes for which they were allocated. Experience with these training programs leads us to recommend strongly that OTAB not only attempt to ensure but instead must ensure. This section must reflect this intent.

Similarly, in paragraphs 4(1)9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 16, we recommend deletion of the words "seek to."

Amend paragraph 4(1)10 to read, "To identify and work to eliminate systemic and other discriminatory barriers to..."

Amend paragraph 4(1)15 to read, "To make effective and efficient use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources, recognizing and encompassing non-traditional and alternative community based training and education."

Paragraph 4(1)16, under "Objects" needs to be rewritten as it is not clear to us what is meant by "within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems."

Amend clause 4(2)(c), under "Criteria," to read, "Distribution of funding of labour force development programs...in a fair and equitable manner," deleting the word "appropriate."

OTAB Structure, section 9, directors: The proposed structure of OTAB's board of directors does provide for the inclusion and participation of equality seeking groups. However, we regard the level of representation as tokenism, and we do not believe that the proposed representation will ensure that their issues and concerns will be accorded full consideration and attention. Concerns are being raised regarding the composition of the governing council of OTAB, which seems to weigh heavily on the side of business and labour. We are therefore recommending the following changes and amendments to this section of the legislation:

Amend paragraph 9(2)2 to read, "Seven directors representing business, including representation from equality seeking groups." There are several racial minorities who are owners of small business enterprises. We emphasize that the directors representing the interest of racial minority businesses must be included among the seven directors.

Amend paragraph 9(2)3 as above.

Amend paragraph 9(2)7 to read, "At least one director representing each of the three major racial minority blocs." Racial minorities do not constitute a monolithic group. It is almost inconceivable that one individual could represent all racial minorities. Each group and subgroup has its own

unique issues, concerns and needs which cannot be adequately articulated by someone from another group.

In the province of Ontario, three major groups or blocs have been identified: blacks, Chinese and South Asians. These groups must be represented on the board. Not only would there be someone who could speak to the issues and concerns of the particular group, but it would create a better balance on the board.

Under "Vacancies," amend subsection 9(8) to read, "If the position of a director becomes vacant, the Lieutenant Governor in Council shall appoint a person within one month of the vacancy occurring to hold office for the unexpired portion of the term or for a new term not exceeding three years." The word "may" denotes discretion and the idea that the vacancy might not be filled. This situation would not be a major problem for business or labour, with large representations on the board. However, to delay filling a vacancy for other constituencies would result in no representation or input into the process. This would defeat the principles of access and participation. It also uncovers a weakness in the proposed representation on the board, which we recommend should be equally represented by the constituents.

Under "Temporary vacancies," amend and change subsection 9(9) as above, substituting "shall" for "may." All vacancies, whether resulting from temporary leave of absence or resignations, must be filled as quickly as possible.

Under "Alternates," amend subsection 9(10) to apply to all constituencies with small representation. We understand the rationale behind this provision for persons with disabilities, and we commend the inclusion of the provision in the bill. We believe that if alternatives were appointed for those constituencies with low representation, temporary vacancies would pose a problem unless the alternates were unavailable at the same time as the appointed directors. Equal representation could always be another method of resolving the problem, as there would always be some representation.

Under "Additional directors," delete subsections 11(1) and 11(2). We recognize the need for involvement of the partners in the labour force development program at as many levels as possible, but we fear that this again can make for a top-heavy and unbalanced board, putting the equality-seeking groups at a disadvantage. If they have no vote, then they are merely observers and do not need to be involved nor their presence provided for under legislation. If they are needed for clarification of specific issues, they can be invited to a board meeting where such a discussion will take place.

Under section 12, "Meetings," we feel that there's no need to legislate the number of meetings to be held. There could be emergency meetings held at times which cannot be regulated. This section should be under "Policies and procedures." Therefore, we recommend that this section be removed from the act.

Under "Local training and adjustment boards," amend subsection 18(1) to read, "OTAB shall ensure the establishment of local training and adjustment boards," deleting, "in accordance with the regulations made under this act." Local boards are an integral part of the labour force

development system; they coordinate information, services, prevent duplication of training needs and provide input into policy development. Consequently, OTAB should ensure their existence. Provision for their existence should be made in the act and not in the regulations.

Under "Powers and duties," delete the words "that are assigned by the regulations" under subsections 18(2) and (3). The powers and duties of the local boards should be included in the act and not in the regulations. It seems incredible that the number of meetings of the board would be included in the act but not the integral elements of the structure.

Under "Funding," we want subsection 18(4) to say, "OTAB shall provide funding...."

Under "Councils," amend subsection 19(1) to read, "OTAB shall establish councils," and delete the same as above.

Under "Powers and duties," delete the words "and that are assigned by the regulations." We believe that the powers and duties of the councils are to be spelled out in the act. We recommend that there be a new subsection added identifying the powers and duties of the councils.

Under "Remuneration," amend subsection 19(5) to read, "OTAB shall pay council members...."

Under "Reference committees," amend subsection 20(1) to read, "Reference committees shall be established by the groups named in subsection 9(2) and section 10," deleting, "in accordance with the regulations made under this act."

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I now come to the general comments that we at the coalition have made. The labour market partners of OTAB consist mainly of business and labour. There is no place under the OTAB legislation that takes into account the provision for community-based training and education. We feel that independent, not-for-profit, community-based training organizations serve a need not otherwise met under this act. Community-based training and employment programs serve people who are excluded from institutional education and employer-based training.

We feel that community-based training and education should have a seat on the local boards and on OTAB and its councils. Provision should be included for equity of access and outcome for all people in need of training and education.

We feel and recommend that OTAB and the government of Ontario should create a training and education system with alternate structures which will establish equal training partnerships between community-based organizations and the community college system. If we are to be equitable and fair in the delivery of programs and services within the framework of OTAB, special measures should be taken for inclusion of marginalized groups.

Access and accreditation: There is nothing in the act regarding access to trades and professions. There are many people coming into Canada who have had professional careers in their country and now are either unemployed or underemployed. These people bring with them a wealth of experience and expertise. Within the coalition, women are very concerned about the lack of recognition for their

credentials and the poor educational assessments they get when they are seeking to retrain, especially where the credentials are not recognized or known in Canada.

We feel that OTAB should play a major role in determining prior learning assessment, evaluation and equivalency of education based on the recommendations as set out in the report, Access to Trades and Professions in Ontario.

The Coalition of Visible Minority Women believes that access is the recognition of and accreditation for the skills and education that we bring with us to this country; we believe that it is the right to the same quality of education and training; it is the right to fair employment, assessment and promotion in the workplace; it is the right to meaningful training and retraining, and it is the right to maintain and uphold our cultural and linguistic values within our commitment to settlement and citizenship in Canada.

We would also like to recommend an additional objective in the act which will ensure access to professions and the setting up of a system that will allow for prior learning assessment, evaluation of credentials and education equivalency.

There is nothing in the act regarding our youth, especially young black males, who are at risk and are falling through the cracks in society. They need to be able to have access to meaningful training programs which will result in employment and not just for the sake of being trained. We must ensure that our education systems succeed in providing our young people with employable skills.

For our youth to be able to compete in a global economic environment, we must greatly improve our education standards. Racism, prejudices and discrimination, systemic and institutional, make it imperative that our training and education systems develop the type of timetable and methods that will allow for all our young people, regardless of colour, race or culture, to gain the knowledge that will allow them to meet the competitive demands of the labour force with confidence and pride. Once again, we thank you for giving us the opportunity to appear before you to speak on this important issue.

The Acting Chair (Mr Mike Farnan): Thank you very much. In the rotation of questions, each caucus will have one minute, and we'll go to the Liberal caucus.

Mr Ramsay: Elaine, thank you very much for your presentation. Obviously, a lot of work has gone into this. I was so impressed with how thorough a job you've done that I counted, as you went along, how many amendments you are suggesting. I've counted 26 amendments and then 27 when you talked about making sure there was access to trades and professions and giving recognition for past learning.

I just wanted to ask you, because you've brought a lot here, do you have any sense of how many amendments the government might be bringing forward?

Ms Prescod: How many what, sir?

Mr Ramsay: Amendments the government might be bringing forward.

Ms Prescod: No, I don't have any idea. I don't know.

Mr Ramsay: We understand it's zero, and we hope not. I must tell you that I will be bringing forward some

amendments next week that reflect some of your concerns, and I hope that some of the government members will support those. You've done a lot of work, but 149 other groups that really take this seriously have also done a lot of work and have brought forward good ideas.

The Acting Chair: We're out of time, Mr Ramsay. I have to move on to Mr Turnbull.

Mr Ramsay: I hope we can get some of these changes for you.

Ms Prescod: Mr Ramsay, we have a good chairperson working with us. Ms Osborne here has sat with me.

Mr Ramsay: You've done good work.

The Acting Chair: Excuse me, Mr Turnbull has the floor.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you for an excellent brief. Elaine, because of the time constraints, I'm just going to ask you about one thing. One of my constituents came to me recently. He had been in the country for a number of years, he was a member of a visible minority, and he gave me a very sensible suggestion, a suggestion which I've communicated to the federal government, and I'd just like you to comment on it. He was saying that Employment and Immigration should tell people before they come to this country what will be accepted of their existing training and should tell them if there are any upgrading courses that they should undertake in their own country before they come here so that they're better able to fit in. Could you just comment on that?

Ms Prescod: Mr Turnbull, we have had people come to us telling us that they have been told by consulates in their country that they can come here and start to work in a hospital. My area is working in health, where women come and bring with them all these papers, all the work that they have done, and then they ended up working at Harvey's and McDonald's. While I don't at any time criticize people who have to work in those outlets, it means that we are taking people who have got a lot of training, a lot of experience, and don't need very much, don't need three years, but they cannot get back into that particular profession, so they become frustrated.

I think we have to start to send away to the embassies that are looking at these people and tell them what is expected, because many of the people do not know what they're getting into, and I see it on a daily basis.

The Acting Chair: We must move to the next question.

Mr Marchese: Elaine, I just wanted to thank you for the presentation. There are a lot of things in this presentation that are very important to look at in terms of what we need to do to address them.

You raised a very important point on page 9: "In the province of Ontario three major groups or blocs have been identified. These are blacks, Chinese and South Asians." I think you correctly point out that we can't assume or pretend that we can appoint one person to represent all these communities. Even within the black community, there are different community interests, and we can't assume as whites that one black will do. We have to find a way to deal with that, and I agree with that. I think this point

needs to be overemphasized because I think legislatures, provincially, federally and municipally, make this error all of the time, so I wanted to agree with the point.

Also in terms of youth representatives, it's a problem. A number of groups that I've spoken to have observed that this is an omission that needs to be addressed. I don't know how we address it, but we need to look at that. We have a problem in terms of how you identify the one person, black or white.

The Acting Chair: At this stage, I want to thank the Ontario Coalition of Visible Minority Women, Fleurette Osborne, co-chair of the board, and Elaine Prescod, coordinator of the coalition. The presentation was excellent. I'm sorry we didn't have a little more time for our interaction, but obviously there are other groups coming behind you who are waiting, and we have to be fair to everybody and allow them to move forward.

Ms Fleurette Osborne: Can I just make one comment?

The Acting Chair: You may make a point, if it's very brief, but we do have another delegation coming behind you.

Ms Osborne: There are some typos in the text. Could we correct those and then send you a corrected copy of the text.

The Acting Chair: That will be fine. Thank you very much, and congratulations on your participation in this committee and the contribution you're making to the process.

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CANADIAN FEDERATION OF INDEPENDENT BUSINESS

The Acting Chair: The next group is the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. Presenting are Jim Bennett, senior vice-president, provincial affairs, and Judith Andrew, director, provincial policy. There are just the two? Come forward and carry on with the presentation. There is half an hour. We encourage people to leave about 15 minutes if they want to have a dialogue or interaction with the committee, but the discretion is yours as to how much time you will use of that half-hour.

Mr Jim Bennett: We'll try to be as brief as possible to allow as much time as possible for questioning.

Interjections.

The Acting Chair: We'll ask the committee members please to tune in and listen to the presentation.

Mr Bennett: We welcome the chance to appear to discuss Bill 96 on behalf of our 40,000 member firms in Ontario. I'd like to start by setting our presentation in context. The first point that has to be understood when looking at the introduction of a training and adjustment board in Ontario is that there is no training crisis in the workplace. The National Training Survey, which was released earlier this week, shows that 70% of private sector firms provide structured training for employees; 76% of firms provide unstructured or informal training. The cost of the structured training for a very small portion of the respondents surveyed was \$3.6 billion. CFIB ran a parallel survey of on-the-job training, both formal and informal, and found

that small and medium-sized firms had invested \$5.6 billion in on-the-job training.

Keep in mind that both those figures relate to training carried out in the depth of the recession. That's why I say there is no training crisis in the workplace. Contrary to the allegations of the country's union leaders and other profits of doom, the business community, including the small business community, is pulling its weight in training its employees.

Since business is already providing workplace training, neither sticks nor carrots are required to induce training for the current workforce. The arguments of organized labour calling for yet another payroll tax therefore must be ignored. The real training crisis is among those not in the workforce, would-be entrants such as laid off workers, youth, women and immigrants who in some cases lack the literacy and generic workplace skills to take the emerging, value added jobs in the service sector.

Because those training deficiencies are societal responsibilities, there is no valid reason to scapegoat the business community. The adjustment problems of displaced workers are beginning to be addressed by the \$2.2 billion of UI funds allocated for developmental uses. The business community pays the majority of premiums for UI. Employers also pay both residential and commercial property tax to support primary and secondary school systems, and income and sales taxes can be directed towards post-secondary education. Another payroll tax for training would be both unfair and counterproductive.

Also, as part of the context, I should let you know that job creation among small firms in this province has pretty well ground to a halt, and there are two principal and related reasons for this unwillingness of small firms to do more hiring. The first is the tax burden, particularly profit-insensitive taxes, the ones you have to pay whether you have a profit or not, payroll taxes, property taxes. So imposing more payroll taxes for training would be counterproductive and unfair.

The second factor is the lack of confidence in the policies of governments, and in Ontario, particularly the provincial government. The proportion of our members indicating that having more confidence in the provincial government was a prerequisite for job creation was higher in Ontario than in any other jurisdiction. Imposing another payroll tax would be seen as yet another unfair concession to organized labour and would further erode the limited trust the small business community has for the current provincial government.

As I say, the distrust of Ontario's government would be reinforced by a training tax and would just add to the tax fatigue of the small firm sector. That's the context in which you're introducing OTAB. I have to also say that small firms are very wary of trusting their fate to an agency which will be dominated by big, primarily organized business and by unions. Several of the recommendations made later in this submission address this concern, and the history underlines why small firms are so wary of this issue.

The de Grandpré report's recommendation that governments impose a levy grant to fund training was unacceptable to small business, and it was also seen by many in the

small business sector as typical of what happens when big business gets together with big labour and big government: collectively, they serve up small business on a platter. Under a levy-grant system, small firms would pay the levy, and big firms that have the resources and the experience in milking the grant system would get more grants. The recent experiences with both the Workplace Health and Safety Agency and with Bill 40 increase small business' reluctance to enter into any so-called partnership with our corporate giants, let alone with unions and the current provincial government.

If the truth be known, most representatives of broad-based business associations are at the negotiation table for OTAB out of a perceived need to defend their members' interests, not through any enthusiasm for the chance to work together with this government and its affiliates in the Ontario Federation of Labour. The recommendations outlined below, if accepted, would go a long way to reducing the level of suspicion felt towards OTAB by many in the business community.

The first and fundamental recommendation is that the regulations outlined in section 30 should be published in draft form and subject to serious deliberation before the act gets third reading. Judith, is there a precedent for this?

Ms Judith Andrew: Yes. I would just indicate for the committee that the employment equity legislation is of course being prepared for second reading, but in conjunction with the employment equity legislation, the minister has committed to releasing regulations so that the whole package can be examined together by the people who need to make it work. We think this is a very positive thing and obviously would recommend it in the case of OTAB.

Mr Bennett: This is an issue that would help to really reduce a lot of the suspicion and anxiety. Another one is the long-standing contention on the subject of the decision-making process. This matter, which is referred to in clause 30(1)(b), is essential for the establishment of the trust level needed to convince businesses that they should be more than guarded participants in OTAB.

What we're suggesting is that a majority of each of the three main groups, labour, business and the equity representatives, in addition to an overall majority, should be required for a vote to pass. While consensus is a desirable goal—and after a couple of years on the national training board, I can say you usually get it—there will be issues on which votes will be required. Each of the main partners must be sure that its interests cannot be ignored in such votes. The reason I exclude the training and education community is that they are really providers and, as such, are closer to government than they are to any of the other three groups.

A second set of issues on which draft regulations should be reviewed relates to local training and adjustment boards. These issues are found in clauses 30(1)(c), (d) and (e). We share the conviction of most of the business groups that the question of establishing, assigning powers and duties to, and funding local boards must be resolved in a manner that gives the maximum autonomy and responsibility to local boards. That's where the identification of

training needs, the selection of the best resource for training and the evaluation of the training can best be handled.

The fact that a centralized bureaucracy run from Queen's Park has a private sector board of directors does not guarantee such a body will be any more successful than a remote organization run by civil servants. Centralized control of priority setting and of spending works against achieving the best value for money in Ontario's training initiatives. Specifically, there is concern that the powerful influence of public sector unions on the OFL will lead to all training expenditures in the province being channelled through public institutions. We, like other business groups, recognize there is a role for public institutions, but it cannot be fulfilled to the exclusion of private trainers. Private trainers must have fair access to competition. Our members have told us that private trainers provide the best value for training in preparing the workforce, and we cannot see them squeezed out.

1700

The issue of the composition of local boards is another subject on which CFIB has strong concerns. Those concerns also apply to OTAB and the councils under OTAB, subsections 9(2) and clauses 30(1)(c) and (f). We're concerned that well-established representative employee associations which have long been involved in training activities are going to be excluded from all of the bodies mentioned above. For example, there are national and provincial organizations representing workers in occupational groups such as technicians and technologists, information processing society, travel agents and chefs, and for years they've taken part in training programs within their respective industries. They should not be excluded from participating in OTAB, the local training boards or related councils, nor should non-affiliated unions be excluded from these bodies.

Labour has always taken the position that it has to determine who will represent workers. This hasn't stopped them from insisting that private trainers, farmers and public sector employers must be included in the business delegations to those bodies mentioned above. I think the provincial government has a responsibility to overcome the exclusionary tendencies it has shown in its selection and make sure the reference committees mentioned in subsection 20(1) are expanded to include the non-union worker representatives and non-affiliated unions mentioned above.

One final recommendation on the subject of representation must be made. The agricultural community should have its own separate director on OTAB. We think that if it means adding another director, so be it.

We have one final set of recommendations to improve Bill 96, and that has to do with making sure that the organizations involved nominate rather than consult, because that shows that they're really representative.

There are a number of other issues, but in the interest of time I'd like to sum up by saying that unfortunately the current working relationship between business and the government of Ontario is so strained that there's very little trust on either side. Unless some changes are made, unless some of the recommendations of the groups that are

appearing before you are adopted, that distrust will just be magnified.

The recommendations listed above should be viewed as the minimum requirements to overcome the strong reservations of business about OTAB. If these recommendations are accepted, most business associations are likely to work towards consensus on the crucial problems which OTAB must face and solve.

Mr Turnbull: Thank you very much. I'd like to welcome you as your member in the provincial Legislature.

Mr Bennett: Thank you.

Mr Turnbull: You mentioned a payroll tax, and I suppose this is one of my greatest concerns about the bill: How, on an ongoing basis, OTAB will be funded. I know you mentioned that you don't want to see this, but can you just comment on the impact of that. You've already seen the impact of the payroll tax for health on businesses, particularly small businesses.

Mr Bennett: It would be devastating in terms of job creation, given all the other increases in payroll tax and workers' compensation premiums that businesses have faced. The reason we raise it, even though it isn't in the bill, is that the previous minister responsible for OTAB, when asked about this just said: "This is something that OTAB will deal with itself. We are not going to move on it." I think that's not good enough. Without the kind of self-defence clause that we're asking for in these triple majorities, basically the government is just saying to business: "Sign a blank cheque. Join OTAB and deal with the payroll tax later. Take your chances." Those aren't good odds. Anybody who goes in on that basis is a sucker.

Mr Turnbull: Something I've touched on quite a bit during these hearings is the fact that the government often holds up Germany as the paragon of training programs, and indeed we all know that they've got excellent apprenticeship programs in Germany. There are some 200 identified trades and professions which are organized under the auspices of apprenticeships. Certainly, Germany is a very high-cost country with a higher cost of living than Canada. Yet, notwithstanding that, you have a quid pro quo of some of the workers in Germany that people who are in apprenticeship programs earn between \$575 per month and \$650 a month, so they are contributing towards the cost of the training.

Companies invest massively in their employees, but there's the expectation that they will remain their employees and hopefully will become part of their regular workforce when the apprenticeship has finished. Government, too, invests in these people, and there's that sort of partnership between the three parties. It doesn't seem to be apparent here in Canada. Could you comment on that.

Mr Bennett: It's not; let's not kid ourselves. We operate from an adversarial stance in this province. OTAB has a major challenge to try and overcome that.

One of the things we should also be aware of is that the German system, the Dutch system and the British system, all of which were studied in preparing OTAB, none of them have any equity or trainer participation. In all of those cases, they are strictly tripartite: government, business and

labour. With the German model, particularly having met with the German minister, they're having trouble with an increasing number of people trying to get out of their training system, their dual system, and go into universities.

We can learn a lot, and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board is working on occupational standards, but I think the key issue is partnership. I think one of the best examples of partnership is a literacy program that's going on in Saskatchewan where the government provides training. It's in-workplace literacy. The government provides the instructor, the business gives a couple of hours a week off with pay and the worker has to give a couple of hours a week of his or her time. Those kinds of initiatives and those kinds of partnerships have some chance of succeeding, but we've got a lot of suspicion and a lot of mistrust to overcome before we get there.

Ms Andrew: If I could just add something, we detailed at the beginning of our brief the investment that small business makes in training. Of course, considerable studies show that small business is offering new job opportunities for young people, some times the first job experience that they get. The effect of any kind of payroll tax would be to draw down the ability of small business to offer those new training opportunities, first job opportunities to young people. That's a big problem.

Mr Turnbull: You speak about the mistrust that exists between business and labour today. Do you not think this is going to be somewhat exacerbated by the composition of the board because there's such an overwhelming representation from the labour side by union representation?

Mr Bennett: That is a concern, and we did raise the issue of these non-union representative organizations. One of the key principles behind this is that all the partners have their own reference groups, and they are representative groups, where you have elections and you have identifiable, legitimate organizations. There are a number of worker organizations which meet those criteria that are going to be excluded from OTAB, the local boards and the councils. We think that's wrong.

Mr Turnbull: I take it you would not see any particular difficulty in identifying suitable labour representatives from the non-unionized sector.

Mr Bennett: Not at all, although we think that all these other worker groups should be part of the reference group and it should be the reference that does it. Right now, the federation of labour seems to be doing all the picking, and quite a number of non-affiliated unions and some of these non-unionized groups are excluded. So this issue of the reference group for labour is a vital concern.

Mr Marchese: Quickly, Jim, because I want to share my questions with my colleague here, you mentioned, and perhaps you can confirm the statistic, that we're spending approximately \$9.2 billion from the private sector.

Mr Bennett: Yes.

Mr Marchese: That is an incredible sum. I've never heard of that. If we're spending this kind of money on training, we should have an excellent system of training in this country and we shouldn't even be worried about this

whole thing at all, given the kind of money that you're spending.

Mr Bennett: We do have a far better system for workplace training than anybody recognizes. That's why I say the training crisis is not in the workforce; it's in the laid-off workers. It's an adjustment problem. It's a transition-into-employment problem. We have a problem. The public colleges recognize it themselves in their own Vision 2000. We have a problem with timing of training being provided in some cases. We have a problem that government-to-government transfers were paying for training whether it was needed or not, and you took a course in hairdressing or welding because that's what they were offering. There are, outside of workplace training, an awful lot of deficiencies, and that's where I think the focus has to be.

1710

Mr Marchese: Because we didn't have the expertise in some areas, we've imported a lot of people from England and possibly Germany who obviously had the expertise. If that's a lack we have here in this country, why haven't we fixed that, given the kind of training dollars we're putting into this country?

Mr Bennett: A lot of it is no clear designation of what the job requirements, the training requirements, are going to be. The very first place that you will go for this is the local training board, because all of the structures that Employment and Immigration set up with this computerized job tracking system haven't really worked because an awful lot of people in both business and the worker community haven't trusted it and have not really used it. Only 40% of our members go to Canada employment centres when they're looking to hire people. We've got to make sure that the needs are assessed better and that the actual results are evaluated. Those are the two major deficiencies in terms of our current training system.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks for your presentation. It certainly gives us some provocative things to think about. I'm not sure we've heard that training is in crisis before, but we certainly have heard almost consistently that it can be improved. That is a thing that we feel we've arrived at through sharing the responsibility for training with the labour market partners, and that requires cooperation, as you can imagine. We've heard that cooperation is something that's achievable partly because of the need to improve training, to make sure that the money we're spending on it is as effectively spent as possible. You mentioned the National Training Survey, and that's done by the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. Is that the one you're referring to?

Mr Bennett: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: It turns out that one of the main results of the survey, as someone has said, is the way business and labour cooperated to arrive at an understanding of training in the labour market.

Mr Bennett: I was on the steering committee for that. That was a very worthwhile exercise. At the same time, I think one of the really significant results was that for the first time a government study looked at unstructured training

and found out that three quarters of firms were doing it. I would argue that's the more significant outcome.

Mr Gary Wilson: Isn't the problem with unstructured training, though, that the standardization isn't always there, and therefore the portability of the skills that are learned is not present either?

Mr Bennett: There is an issue in terms of recognition, very much like the previous presenters in terms of the issues of recognition of skills. Until we go to a competency based system, for example for apprenticeship, rather than a time serving basis, you're not going to be able to come to grips with this.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay, but won't those issues be raised by one of the labour market partners on OTAB?

Mr Bennett: Hopefully, they are being raised in the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. They are being raised in some of the other provincial boards that have been set up. If we can come up with a structure and a decision-making process that the business community can live with, we can probably get on with some of those issues.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly, and as I say, there are elements of cooperation now that we expect will carry over. Certainly, what we're hearing in these committee hearings is that there is a strong basis for cooperation because of the willingness to move beyond where we are now to make sure that the training we're paying good money for is as effective as possible. I want to say too that the other models are just that: They are comparisons that we can use. But we have to use the resources we have here in Ontario to provide the best training.

Mr Bennett: I agree, and I hope that we consider giving agriculture its own seat even though they don't have one on the national board. I think the importance of agriculture in this province's economy should be recognized by giving it its own separate seat.

Mr Gary Wilson: That raises the question of local boards.

The Chair: Did you have something really pithy?

Mr Gary Wilson: Really pithy? Are you kidding?

The Chair: Brief, too.

Mr Gary Wilson: The purpose of the local boards is to reflect the communities that they will be responsible for. As you pointed out, the regulations have yet to be set, but they have to be done in conjunction with the directors, who have yet to be appointed. We're waiting for the legislation.

Mr Bennett: I don't think they need to be done in conjunction with the directors. I think they should be done before the legislation is passed.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Bennett, Ms Andrew, thank you very much for your presentation. I found it very refreshing, and I hope the government members really saw what you were saying. This is a business group, but it's not just saying it's suspicious of big labour; it's also suspicious of big business, and it's suspicious of big new bureaucracies. That's the problem with OTAB.

What we've got here is an idea that started to develop back in the last government in probably 1988-89, and then

this government has taken about a 1970 model to exercise it. We're creating basically another WCB. We've got a schedule 4 agency which is new, which is pretty scary, because it means this agency can be self-financing. In the bill, it says that they can levy fees for services rendered. I hope we're not going to be sending assessment notices down to all your people for training some day.

I'm very sensitive; I was part of the decision-making of a past payroll tax. I understand the hardship that's caused. I think payroll taxes are wrong; they're not progressive; they're not based on your ability to pay. It hurt a lot of people. We can't go that way, and in fact we shouldn't be going with OTAB. We shouldn't be going with a top-down organization. We should be starting with what we have. I think we can improve on the community industrial training committees, CITCs. We can make them more inclusive, but we've got a good start there and we should be working community by community and bringing people together so there is a community of interests rather than imposing this Queen's Park solution on each community, saying, "This is how it's going to be; it's eight and eight and four and two," or whatever it's going to be. We need more flexibility. I hope your message has gotten through.

Ms Andrew: Speaking from experience, there are a lot of lessons to be learned from the Workplace Health and Safety Agency. They're directly applicable in this situation. It's very important to get a fair structure, fair processes and fair representation in place so that people can cooperate in this area that is obviously important to cooperate in. I think there's been a lot lost in the cooperation on health and safety because of what's happened on the Workplace Health and Safety Agency.

Mr Bennett: I'd like to comment briefly. The concern with the bureaucracy is very significant. One of the other reasons that we think the regulations should be published before the bill is passed is that a parallel review has gone on in terms of reviewing the various ministries and agencies that are going to be brought together. The private sector partners were totally excluded from that. I don't know if anyone in the Legislature has been given any information in terms of the integration and the rationalization that's supposed to take place.

The then-Minister Allen said that these two processes would come together at some point. They have not yet, to the best of my knowledge. So our concern is that they're going to take all these departments, each of which has its own personnel and administrative function. There should be some rationalization. Otherwise, we really are creating a monster. We haven't heard any details. We hope this committee or another committee of the Legislature would be looking at those kinds of issues before this legislation is passed.

Mr Ramsay: Do you know what the total number is, to start, of civil servants in OTAB?

Mr Bennett: I believe it's something in the neighbourhood of 16,000, but I could be wrong.

Mr Ramsay: No, it's 700 to start.

Mr Bennett: Even that's probably too many.

Mr Farnan: It's a long way from 16,000.

The Chair: Thank you to the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. Mr Bennett, Ms Andrew, you've made a valuable contribution to the process. You've obviously peaked the interest of members of the committee; that's demonstrated by the exchanges they've had with you. We are grateful to you. We trust that you'll be keeping in touch. Thank you kindly. Take care. We're recessed till 5:30.

The committee recessed at 1719 and resumed at 1730.

ASSOCIATION OF HISPANIC CANADIAN PROFESSIONALS

The Vice-Chair: The next scheduled presenter is the Association of Hispanic Canadian Professionals. If you could identify yourselves for the purposes of Hansard and proceed with your presentation. You've been allocated one half-hour; the committee would appreciate about 15 minutes of that for questions and answers if you can accommodate its request.

Mr Jaime Libaque-Esaine: My name is Jaime Libaque-Esaine, and I'm one of the founders and the president of the Association of Hispanic Canadian Professionals. We stand before you today to bring to your attention some of the concerns that we have within the Spanish-speaking community, in particular as it pertains to the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board. In the time allotted to us, we'll try to cover very briefly and give you some background of who we are in terms of an Hispanic community and the Association of Hispanic Canadian Professionals. We'll then raise a couple of issues, one regarding the structure of OTAB and the second about wasted, foreign-trained resources, and we'll offer some possible solutions. I'd like to introduce Guillermo Ramirez, who will be covering the first part of the background for the committee.

Mr Guillermo Ramirez: I'm a chartered accountant, and I have done some work with the association of hispanic professionals in the past. I also am the volunteer treasurer of the Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples, and we support the OTAB initiative. We would like to raise some of our concerns about Hispanic professionals who have been trained abroad, have been trained overseas and have experience, and yet are not able to find their way into the labour market in Ontario because of cultural as well as language obstacles.

By conservative estimates, there are roughly 100,000 Hispanics in Ontario. We are among the five largest ethnic groups in Ontario, and in Toronto, of course, we've experienced a tremendous growth in the last five years or so. We also find that a large number of people from the community have been trained in colleges and universities overseas in Latin America and Spain, and through studies that have been conducted by the Hispanic Council of Metropolitan Toronto as well as information coming from the censuses of 1991 and 1993, we have concluded that appropriately 10% of the community, or roughly 10,000 people, have completed their post-secondary education. That's how we conclude that 70% to 80% of the people have not been able to find their way into the actual occupations they were trained for, and that's why we'd like to see some OTAB initiatives to try to get these people to go through an adjustment and start in the labour force.

Mr Libaque-Esaine: You have a copy of the handout. I'd like to now tell you briefly about the Association of Hispanic Canadian Professionals, which has, very generally speaking, an advocacy role. Guillermo and I and the people behind us are some of the fortunate people who are able to work in our professions in Ontario, but that's not the case for the majority of our people, and we are talking about a ballpark figure of 8,000 people.

So we've been outspoken on the issue of access, and that goes back to 1987-88 when there was the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades, and we supported the initiative of having an independent agency that would help eliminate some of the systemic barriers. We've held some public information events within the Hispanic community, and on a limited basis we've been serving as a catalyst for training or retraining some of the Hispanics.

About issues, from the information that we've been able to gather and interpret, we notice that the structure of the governing body has eight representatives from the business sector, eight from labour, one from a racial minority, one woman and so on, and it doesn't appear that this composition addresses the needs of foreign-trained people. We're saying that carefully because we are aware of the guidelines, that there will have to be a mix of gender and race within the labour and business representatives. However, we still feel that there is not a direct avenue for these people to come to OTAB and make a case.

Furthermore, out of the four areas of activities, there is only one that appears to be the only possible one for foreign-trained people, and that is the area of labour force entry or re-entry. However, in light of the other three areas of activity, we wonder if this would be an area that OTAB will pay attention to.

Part of the issue is that we've never seen any of the facilitating access words throughout the report at all. The Ministry of Citizenship has made the recommendation that OTAB facilitates access, and we haven't seen that reflected in the proposal. That was done back in December in response to the Stephen Lewis report.

The second issue is the one Guillermo began explaining within the context of the Hispanic community, and that's the wasted trained people who present a business opportunity for OTAB. It is a business opportunity in the sense that it costs less to retrain people rather than training them from scratch. So we claim that retraining is very cost-effective.

There is a problem, though. Training or retraining only makes sense if some of the licensing bodies, for example, the Ontario Medical Association or the Association of Professional Engineers of Ontario or the architects and so on, buy into the retraining programs. Why would we invest in retraining people if those licensing bodies are not willing to accept those retrained people and give them licences?

Based on those issues, we've discussed among ourselves and come up with some possible solutions. First, we feel that if OTAB were going to expand its mandate to work with the licensing bodies in designing retraining programs acceptable to them, that would be a plus. It would be a step in the right direction. Second, we think that if OTAB was going to make it a priority to retrain people

with foreign qualifications, it would also be in its best interests. To do that, it would certainly be necessary to quantify the resource base of the ethnic communities. We are already offering what we know of the Spanish-speaking community, but there are other communities that also have a significant number of trained people, and our association is willing to assist.

Another possible solution to the issue of a structure is whether OTAB would consider providing better access to the decision-making processes through either community groups or ethnic groups. It is true that you already have one position, but we are not, for instance, clear on who the person is, and we're not sure if that would be the only and the best way to access OTAB. With that, I'd like to conclude our short presentation and leave a few minutes for questions that you may want to ask.

1740

The Chair: I'm sure there will be.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much for your presentation. I share your concerns, because it isn't really spelled out how much access there will be, especially to positions on the board, to minority people in the community. I am moving amendments in the bill that spell this out more fully with regard to the local board, because I think where a lot of the real work is going to happen is at the local level, and I want to ensure that the establishment of the local board reflects fairly the makeup of that community. I think, if this is to work, that's what will have to happen. So I think we need to get that language put into the legislation.

The other thing I am concerned about is that the three of you represent the professions. At this time, the professions aren't represented on OTAB, and that concerns me too, because I think an Ontario-wide training and adjustment board should basically include all types of working activity, be it the low end, the medium end or the high end. But for some reason, people in the professions have been excluded from this. People in the professions have to keep up to date too. All of us are going to have to retrain. Regardless of what our educational background is, we're going to have to always upgrade our training, and I think that's important. So nobody should be excluded. We want to make this inclusive and make sure everybody's part of this.

I think that's a flaw here. It is geared primarily for certain types of work, represented by certain people, and I think we've got to open it much more. So I hope the government will do that. At this moment, we understand they are not planning any amendments; I hope that they will or certainly listen to some of the amendments that will be moved by our party and the other opposition party next week so that we will see some changes.

Mr Libaque-Esaine: We certainly welcome your understanding and the possibility of making amendments to the bill in the interests of recovering some of the wasted resources that we see in the community, where downward mobility has occurred to the point that it has a very adverse impact not only to the individuals but to society at large.

Mr Ramsay: The other point you bring out, and other groups have as well, is what a terribly wasted resource we have in this country with people we've invited into this

country and we don't allow them to work up to their abilities. That's just a shame, and we really have to rectify that problem and get that recertification or whatever needs to happen so that people will be allowed to work in their profession in this country.

Mr Libaque-Esaine: Perhaps if I can take that one step further, we are seeing as very important the possibility of OTAB liaising with a licensing body to that end, because even though we could be training or retraining those people, there are systemic barriers of access to the practice of those professions or trades, and the initiatives that we are seeing from Citizenship are still falling short, but that's a separate matter. We will be making a presentation to them.

However, we saw the opportunity of OTAB working or perhaps establishing some avenues with those licensing bodies and maybe in a collaborative approach trying to redesign some of the training programs. They have specific requirements, for instance. Would the committee be willing to?

Mr Ramsay: I think that's something that OTAB should take into account and should work on. It's got to be an agency that not only gets itself involved in training and retraining but also in making sure people are put in a position so they're able to work to their potential. I think that should be included in their mandate for sure.

Mr Marchese: Jaime, do you think that OTAB, and you're fairly aware of what its intended purpose is, should also cover all of the professions, the legal, medical, engineering and other professions, under this one body?

Mr Libaque-Esaine: That's an interesting question. I know that in the case of the medical profession or the legal profession it has specific requirements, and in fact the medical doctors with foreign qualifications are the hardest hit in terms of having access to their own occupations, and lawyers or attorneys from overseas have an equal degree of difficulty. The other professions, engineering or computer science, are perhaps not as adversely affected as the medical and legal professions.

However, as a matter of principle, I think OTAB should be all encompassing. Whether resources allowed to direct programs go to all those professions or to a few of them at the beginning will be a matter of assessing who the people in need are. I think that the social realities will have to be taken into account, the practicality of implementation, the feasibility, and maybe things can be staged, but as a matter of principle, I think we should be all inclusive.

Mr Marchese: I just want to tell you, Jaime, that from my point of view, to try to include all of those professions under OTAB is just an enormous task. I'm not sure how workable that would be in fact. What I do say, however, in terms of the issue that you raise is that this government has to address it, and I know that we are. I hope that soon, in the near future, we will be addressing the issue that you've raised.

On the issue of representation of other ethnic and racial groups, we hope that the four members we have on the OTAB board will reflect the interests of women, minorities, people with disabilities, francophones and other

people who do educational training and that the views of ethno-racial groups will be reflected. My hope as well is that, in addition to that, some of the labour people and some of the business people will reflect the interests of ethnocultural and racial groups. So I think we should be lobbying for that as well to make sure that is reflected in that structure. Thanks for coming here.

Mr Libaque-Esaine: Certainly, we were aware of the guidelines for the composition of those representatives of labour and business. We decided to raise the issue because we thought we would have a possibility of making a contribution if there was an avenue known to us that works similar to us.

Mr Marchese: Thank you for coming here.

Mr Ramirez: I can add something. I find one of the major parts of the Ontario budget, for example, relates to health, and the health professions are very strongly represented within the community, yet there is no way they can service the community. For example, we were talking about psychologists, nurses and doctors who understand the people in the Hispanic community, as opposed to people who have more difficulty understanding the community and communicating with the community, and yet these people are not able to service the very people they understand, which creates more problems for the individuals as they have to go three times to the doctor instead of going one time. Instead of having one problem, they will have a number of situations. So that's a major part of our lives, the health part, and I think that will perhaps help out.

Mr Marchese: I agree with you. Thank you.

The Chair: I want to thank you on behalf of the committee for your interest in this matter, for your presentation today and for being prepared to share your views with us and participate in this committee process. You've played an important role in what this committee does, and we are all grateful to you.

Mr Libaque-Esaine: Thank you very much.

The Chair: We trust that you'll keep in touch, and feel free to speak, write and communicate with either committee members individually or with any other MPP, as far as that goes.

This bill will be going into clause-by-clause next week here at Queen's Park. There will be an opportunity for caucuses to present amendments. The bill will then be going back into the House for third reading, and your participation at that point is welcome, as it is today. Thank you kindly.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chairman, will all caucuses be presenting amendments next week? Do you know?

The Chair: Well, I'm only the Chair. Obviously, some people are playing their cards closer to their chest than others are. That's the way the game is played. So be it.

Mr Ramsay: Okay, Mr Chair.

The Chair: It remains that this has been a most interesting week here at Queen's Park. We will be dealing with this issue by way of clause-by-clause next week in committee room 1, where it will not be televised, but people of course are still welcome to attend. There should be some

lively debate, and the coffee is free. One of Toronto's best kept secrets is that the committee rooms at Queen's Park, which are accessible to any member of the public, and there's no dress code, have the best free coffee in all of Toronto. People are welcome to drop in and partake.

It's been an interesting week this week. We are grateful to Angi Tipett and Diane Huff, the sign language interpreters who have been with us throughout the week, and they have performed their function with great vigour and enthusiasm. It's been a tiring job for them, I'm sure, but we appreciate their work. The Hansard staff, Deborah Caruso and Maureen Murphy, are very valuable to the committee. The legislative broadcast people work very hard and control the camera angles, make sure that people get mikes turned on, make sure that people get on screen when they're supposed to be on screen and off when they're not supposed to be: Rocco Rampino, who's been exceptional, Louise Lebeau, Tony Giverin and Simon Dalrymple, some of them working at the scene and some behind the scenes. We thank them.

The French language interpreters, who have kept up with some rather rapid speeches, sometimes have kept up with the phenomenon of two or more people speaking at the same time and, again, they are highly skilled people who are extremely valuable to the committee's work. They are Stephen Capaldo, Sylvie Soth, Marie-Claire Pageot and Delia Roy-Ibarra. Of course, Ms Anne Anderson, our

legislative research person; Tannis Manikel, the clerk, has been simply outstanding, and we are all grateful to her for making this week far easier than it would have been otherwise. The ministry staff have sat here and listened to every submission, made copious notes and will undoubtedly be considering every viewpoint expressed with the view to improving legislation which has great potential.

My special thanks to Bob Huget and Mike Faman for assisting me during the course of today and the week in chairing this committee. My thanks to all the committee for their cooperation and patience.

Mr Marchese: And special acknowledgement to the Chair.

Mr Huget: I too would like to add my thanks to all those people you've mentioned and a group that hasn't been mentioned, I think, and that's all the witnesses who took the time to come before the committee and appear. I would also like to acknowledge the constructiveness and the professionalism of Mr Ramsay from the Liberal Party and Ms Cunningham, as well as Mr Wilson from Kingston and The Islands. I think it's been a most productive set of hearings, and I've sure appreciated the environment in which these hearings were conducted.

The Chair: Well said, sir. We are adjourned until 2 pm on Monday. Thank you, people.

The committee adjourned at 1753.

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

***Chair / Président:** Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold ND)

***Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

***Acting Chair / Président suppléant:** Farnan, Mike (Cambridge ND)

Conway, Sean G. (Renfrew North/-Nord L)

Dadamo, George (Windsor-Sandwich ND)

Jordan, Leo (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Klopp, Paul (Huron ND)

McGuinty, Dalton (Ottawa South/-Sud L)

Murdock, Sharon (Sudbury ND)

***Offer, Steven (Mississauga North/-Nord L)**

***Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)**

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

***Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)**

***In attendance / présents**

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L) for Mr McGuinty

Carr, Gary (Oakville South/-Sud PC) Mr Jordan

Farnan, Mike (Cambridge ND) for Ms Murdock

Marchese, Rosario (Fort York ND) for Mr Wood

Marland, Margaret (Mississauga South/-Sud PC) for Mr Turnbull

Martin, Tony (Sault Ste Marie ND) for Mr Waters

Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway

Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Klopp

Wiseman, Jim (Durham West/-Ouest ND) for Mr Dadamo

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Anderson, Anne, research officer, Legislative Research Service

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Legislative Assembly of Ontario

Second Intersession, 35th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Monday 22 February 1993

Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and
Adjustment Board Act, 1993

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième intersession, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Lundi 22 février 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre

Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Monday 22 February 1993

The committee met at 1402 in committee room 1.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 2:02. We shall wait for a quorum and recess until then.

The committee recessed at 1402 and resumed at 1412.

The Chair: It's 2:12. We've got a quorum. Liberal amendments, Progressive Conservative amendments and government amendments have been printed and distributed to all the members of the committee. Committee members have had an opportunity to review those during the last several minutes. Unanimous consent for one hour total time for opening statements, maximum 20 minutes per caucus? Thank you.

Mr Ramsay, please.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Thank you very much, Mr Kormos. Welcome, everybody. First of all, I'd just like to say, on behalf of our caucus, that we're very saddened to hear of the death of Mike Farnan's wife. I understand we've been able to arrange our committee schedule so that we can accommodate people going to his wife's funeral on Wednesday of this week; we from this side are certainly glad to do so. I'd just like to express our condolences, and my condolences personally, to Mike Farnan. It's certainly a sad day for his family.

I'm glad we are back this week now to start to really look at the bill, all of its clauses and details. We have now completed three weeks of public hearings. Again I'd like to congratulate the committee, because in that time we have probably listened to between 140 and 150 different groups or individuals. I think the committee has worked hard to make sure we have listened to these people. There have been other briefs that have been sent to us in the mail, and still some arriving today; I received two just about an hour ago. There is a lot of interest in an attempt, as the government has here, to bring together all the players, all the parties involved with skills training. It's certainly something that's long overdue.

Just a couple of minutes ago, we were handed amendments from all three parties now. There's a substantial package of amendments that Mrs Cunningham has submitted on behalf of the third party. You will see before you a package, of about similar size, of Liberal amendments to the bill, and just a few minutes ago we were given two amendments to this bill from the government. One is a

correction in the French translation. It wasn't quite as exact as the English, so I understand the reason for that. That was brought to our attention by a couple of the delegates who came before us. The other actually mirrors one of the amendments I will be bringing forward, and I'm pleased to see that. There are no other details on this subsection 18(1). I have a full page that we will discuss later. But I must congratulate the government for doing that.

I have to tell you, that's where the congratulations will have to end. I'm really, really disappointed that after listening to the 140 people with well-thought-out presentations, all of whom are very interested in skills training in Ontario, interested in the idea the government has put forward of establishing a province-wide training and adjustment board, that the government has failed to listen to these people, has failed to respond to all the constructive ideas save one, that we do establish some local boards. The biggest piece of the legislation is missing from the legislation: Do we establish local community boards to try to provide skills training based on the needs that local people have decided on?

I really can't believe it. It's really a sham. The general public is very weary of the political process. As politicians, we've let them down, and at times the process has let people down, and that's sad. We should be trying to correct that, and one of the first steps we could take to try to correct that situation would be to listen to people. We spend a lot of public money for the democratic process of having committee hearings. I think it's important, and as an opposition member I take it very seriously, because it really is a chance where we can all work together as legislators and try to improve a piece of legislation.

But in the parliamentary democracy we have in Ontario, it's been the tradition from government to government, some more than others—with this one in particular, I find that once it brings forward a first reading and a second reading of a piece of legislation, somehow it has been perfected because some consultation has gone on beforehand; that it's a perfect piece of legislation and we no longer have to listen to people. Yet we had 140 to 150 people come forward with some very constructive ideas; not attacking the bill, not saying it's no good, but being constructive and saying: "Good idea. Here are some things we can do to improve it." We don't see anything coming from the government in any substantive way to show that the government has listened to these people.

It's a real shame when we're really just carrying on business as usual and not listening to people. It really is a shame because, as I said before, we spend thousands of dollars doing this: staff time, legislative research resources, legislative counsel resources, and when we're in the other room, we've got television, we've got translation, we have signing people. We had everybody involved and

communicated in every way we could so that everybody in Ontario understood what was going on and had a chance to communicate with their government about what their feelings and concerns were for a very important piece of legislation, and nothing really has come out of it.

I'm going to get off the soapbox when it comes to being critical, because I guess my next point would be to make a plea. My plea would be that all members of the committee take into account all the amendments from all parties that will be put forward this week. Looking at the three sets of amendments, we have an opportunity to listen to the people, because basically all three sets of amendments from all three parties are a distillation of what was said last week. Yes, there's a very small distillate over here on the government side: two ideas that were picked up from last week are there. But from the third party and from the Liberal caucus there are motions of substance that are, I think, consistent with the goals and aspirations of the bill. They're not counter to the bill. They accept the concept that the government has put forward as being a good one.

That's not necessarily what I believe, but now that we're here and we're dealing with this bill, I'd like to make it better. I'd like to help to improve it. These ideas are not necessarily the ideas that have been generated from myself or from my party, but basically they're a distillation, as I said before, of the many men and women who have come forward and in a very thoughtful way put forward some ideas as to how we can make a more effective training and adjustment board for Ontario.

1420

Before I pass my time over to my colleague, I would like to conclude by again making a plea that we all work in good faith and look at the merits of each party's amendments to see if they really will make things better, to try to make a more effective Ontario Training and Adjustment Board so that we will have an effective entity to deal with probably one of the most important subjects in the redevelopment of the Ontario economy. Training, as we all know in this room, has got to be the task we are able to face in the next 10 to 20 years if we are to redevelop this Ontario economy.

We know all the problems. We know the skills gap that we've developed in this province, and we know that various partners in this province have not all pulled their fair share. This is a way to try to bring people together to pull their weight so that we can all work together under one roof, if you will, an Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, to make sure we have a highly skilled workforce in Ontario so that we will better the economy and better people's lives. That's the goal.

Just in closing, I would like to say that I hope there will be a lot of goodwill here; that you will give consideration to not only my amendments but to Mrs Cunningham's amendments so that we can improve this bill. I look forward to this week's deliberations, and I would like to pass the mike over to my colleague Steve Offer.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I know we have a few moments left. By way of opening comment, after having viewed the government's amendments, there are two questions which run through my mind. The first is,

why did you have these hearings? The second is, why did you expend the committee dollars on these hearings?

You have clearly indicated, by the one amendment you've brought forward, that you were not listening to the more than 100 delegations that came before this committee, and we recognize that those 100 to 140 groups represent thousands and thousands of very concerned Ontario citizens: citizens concerned with the status of this province and also with its future, people who are concerned with the track that this government and future governments are going to follow in the area of training, retraining and adjustment, people with a wealth of experience, people who have been with this issue in their communities for years, people who have met the barriers, overcome those barriers, dealt with the issues that confront them, and who looked upon Bill 96 and these hearings as a way to potentially improve the situation.

They came before this committee in good faith. They came with very thoughtful briefs. I think we will all recognize that they had the time to think about what Bill 96 was all about, to look at the significant failings in the bill and to bring forward to this committee how the bill could be improved, allowing the committee and this government and all representatives of this Parliament the opportunity to learn from their experience.

What do we see the government do? One amendment. One amendment which, when you look at it very closely, really does not meet any of their concerns. The government should be ashamed for that. You have not listened to any of the concerns that have been brought forward.

Individuals came forward speaking to the need for community involvement, to the mandatory establishment of local boards. They didn't just leave it at that. They were concerned not only that those boards be mandatorily established, but also spoke to how they were going to operate, what it is they were going to do, who was going to govern them, what was their geographical territory and a variety of other issues.

This amendment you've put forward, I must tell you, is about as insulting to those groups as you could ever imagine; you could not imagine being more insulting to those groups than this amendment is. I think these groups would be less insulted if you didn't put forward that type of amendment, but to put it forward and to think that it's going to meet the concerns of those groups—I'm certainly going to be sending your amendment to them. I'm certainly going to be sending to the many groups that came forward the amendment that you have devised after listening to all of their concerns. I'd be interested to hear what their response is going to be. I can't imagine it would be anything other than being totally insulted.

They'll be asking a very valid question: What happened to the vociferous arguments put forward by the parliamentary assistant and other members of the government when they came forward and said, "We think that the local boards should be established, and they have to be established in the legislation," and then went on to other factors within the establishment of those boards?

What did the parliamentary assistant and all of the NDP government members say? "It can't be done. We

want to do it, but it can't be done because there is the need for that federal-provincial agreement." Members of the opposition parties said, "If you really want to do it, you can do it," but the parliamentary assistant and how many other parliamentary assistants who were there at the time said: "I'm sorry. That's an impossibility. We have the federal-provincial ministers' meeting. We have a variety of agreements that are necessary." There were more acronyms flying in the face of those presentations than one could ever imagine. Day in and day out, a day did not go by when I did not hear that argument: "We need that approval. Agreements have to be reached. We cannot put this in the legislation. We cannot deal with local boards." You said that to those individuals.

Now what do you say with that insulting little amendment? I don't know. It would be interesting to hear the deliberations that took place in the ministry over this amendment. You must be quite put out after having carried the torch, when they said: "Members of the government, when they come forward with the need for those local boards, you've got to make this argument. You've got to say that though we'd like to do it, we can't do it because there are no federal-provincial agreements."

Today, after having carried that torch, after having made that argument, guess what happens? They throw in the amendment. There is no federal-provincial agreement. There is nothing today that is in existence that wasn't when these hearings started. You've been embarrassed.

We'll be dealing with these issues and we'll be dealing with why you haven't listened to the many people, but there is a hope, one hope remains, and that will be your opportunity to support opposition amendments. That is the hope that you have of being able to tell people that you were listening to their concerns. Your amendments do not. Your amendments are insulting, insulting to their presentations and indeed insulting to the position you took just last week.

We will see as to whether you are up to sending out the message that you have been listening. We will see whether you will be able to stand and support opposition amendments, which in many ways deal with the concerns that have been brought forward. Time will tell. The week is here. The motions will be put. Your vote is all that's left to be counted.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Ms Cunningham, please.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Mr Chairman, just so I can gather some information before I make my comments, in fairness, are these in fact the only amendments we are getting from the government? Could I have the question answered?

The Chair: Well, you can put that question to Mr Huget or Mr Wilson. They can choose to answer or not, or they may not know. Mr Huget, do you want to respond to that?

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): No, I don't. I think the member will know at the end of the week.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Wilson, do you want to respond to that question of Ms Cunningham's?

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Could you repeat the question, please?

Mrs Cunningham: I've come here in good faith today. I've kept back some amendments that are "mays" and "shalls" because it's a lot of work for our staff, and during the Bill 40 hearings we did put forth some 96 amendments. We are more than capable of doing the same thing here, but in order to deal in good faith today, we came forward with what we thought would be the major amendments. We have a number of others, if the government is very serious about looking at the input, that we would like to have discussion around on behalf of the people who came before the committee.

1430

I am absolutely shocked, to tell you the truth, with the one amendment I have today. I don't think the answer I got from the member for Sarnia is fair. I'm prepared to work, as I think the other members of the committee are, and I have staff now drafting amendments around the input we got last Wednesday and Thursday because, as you know, I wasn't here. We worked on them this morning, but it's a lot of work. If we're serious about this and if the government is interested, I'd like to move forward in seriousness, but if the government has made up its mind that this is going to be a show, I don't think I want my staff working any harder.

I'm asking a very serious question: Will there be other amendments coming from the government? I need to know the answer to that. That's my first question. I have a subsequent one which relates to it.

Mr Gary Wilson: There are no other amendments coming from the government, but I do want to say that just as with the three weeks of public hearings, we treat these hearings very seriously. We expect that they're going to raise issues that are going to show us the kind of legislation that we have here. I think Mr Huget's response was that we're going to work through any amendments you do bring to see how they will affect the bill.

Mrs Cunningham: So I can get a clarification, Mr Chairman, around Mr Huget's remarks, he said, "Wait till the end of the week." Maybe he meant more with regard to how the government would respond to the amendments we put forth than whether or not the government would have amendments. If they're not going to have any amendments and they want to tell me that, that's helpful, but I think what you said is even more important; that is, that you're anxious to have the input from the public and you're going to be dealing with it. I assume "dealing with it" means action, not just listening, obviously.

The Chair: Mr Huget may have misunderstood your question, and you may have misunderstood his answer. Go ahead, Mr Huget.

Mr Huget: Mr Wilson indicated what the government's position was in terms of further amendments from it. I simply indicated to you, in terms of your amendments and the other party's amendments, that we have to work through the week the way the normal process does and consider those amendments one by one. I'm not

prepared to preclude or prejudice the outcome of clause-by-clause hearings.

Mrs Cunningham: Just so we can further clarify, I asked if there would be any other amendments coming from the government, and the answer the member from Samia put on the record was, "Wait till the end of the week." Does that mean we'll go through all of our amendments and then we'll get them from the government? Because that's not the normal procedure.

The Chair: Mr Wilson also responded to your question. I invited both Mr Huget as the subcommittee member and Mr Wilson as parliamentary assistant to respond or not respond to your question.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): Mr Chair, if I may, I think Mr Wilson was pretty clear that no more amendments are anticipated at this time.

Mrs Cunningham: Then perhaps my next question is even more appropriate. If we're not getting government amendments, does this mean that we're then going to have the government respond to our amendments by either stonewalling them and never voting in favour of any of them, although they're coming from the public in good faith, or is the government serious about looking at these amendments and will it be open-minded about the way it receives them? Do we have any hope of making any other amendments to this legislation?

Mr Gary Wilson: Ms Cunningham, I think we'll have to wait to see what the amendments are—

Mrs Cunningham: You've got them before you right now.

Mr Gary Wilson: Why don't we work through them then, and see just how compelling they are, and then we can take it from there?

Mrs Cunningham: Then I'm going to open my remarks in this way: I will take the comments of the parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Skills Education and Training—the new minister—in good faith, and I will ask my staff to proceed with what they're working on right now and we will be tabling other amendments from time to time. They weren't as difficult as the ones we've given some very careful consideration to.

Two or three of our amendments have to do with ideas around processes within this bill, and it wasn't easy for us to come up with them. We've given our best shot. What we would like to see is that the government looks at them, perhaps even takes them away and comes back with at least the intent worked through in a different way. When we get to them, I can tell you what they are. I'll certainly advise you in advance, Mr Chairman, if the government wants us to, of the difficulties we had with some of the amendments, because obviously there were more than one or two approaches to solve the problem that the public brought before us. Perhaps the parliamentary assistant at that point could tell us whether he would like some more time.

The second point I'd like to make is this: When we set these hearings up, the four weeks that were allotted, three for public input and one for clause-by-clause deliberations,

it was with the understanding that the House would be coming back earlier in March, although that wasn't anything that was written in stone, but it had been the intent, I think, of all of us that that would happen. I'm now speaking on behalf of the House leaders and whips who looked at the committee schedule together.

Second, we weren't certain whether we would be facing a new minister. All of us here can say, I think, with a great deal of sincerity, that the minister who had worked through the OTAB hearings was one who had a direct interest and worked very hard with a lot of people to make certain that the kind of input he got was both relevant and important to the major changes we're making. I personally regret that he isn't with us now and thank him for the leadership he did show.

I also can say on that point that we do have a new minister, and that I myself didn't have an opportunity until Sunday to take a look at the input the committee received on Wednesday and Thursday of last week. I found it interesting and informative, and I know the new minister must be strapped for time. Mr Chairman, I'm not sure how things are working within the government these days—

The Chair: Neither am I, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: And I'm certain that the public of Ontario is even less certain. We're not surprised that you're not certain, Mr Kormos, because you've made that statement before, but I will say that this is probably one of the most important pieces of legislation that we're going to face, and there's a lot of hope for this. In spite of the differences and sometimes the disagreements we've had during the public hearings and the opportunities we've taken to make political points—I don't think excessively, but from time to time we did, and I also think with some good humour and with respect for each other's positions—I really believe this has to work. Without the changes that were brought forward for our consideration, serious consideration on behalf of the government, it won't work, for two reasons: The makeup of the board doesn't receive the full support of the community we're counting on to get this work done. I think I can speak from some experience, given that I've spent a lot of time trying to seek the input, that I feel there must be more direction given to both the business community and the labour community in this legislation.

That's one of the issues we will be speaking to today or later this afternoon. I would hope that if the government thinks there's any merit at all in the amendments we've put forward, it wouldn't rush it through like it's a day-by-day deal, that it would at least take it to the minister or to whoever is responsible, the deputy or the committee members themselves, and give it serious consideration, without just defeating it out of hand. There may be a solution to that makeup that we haven't put forward, but I would hope it won't remain the same.

I can say that during the first day of hearings on this legislation, when both the staff to the minister of the day and the minister of the day appeared before us, they said they would give serious consideration not only to the makeup of the board—because I asked the question—but

to the process of deliberation whereby there may be an impasse. I think in seriousness the government was looking for suggestions. With that in mind, if anyone called my office for advice around whether or not the government was serious, I encouraged them to make their submissions and to give the best advice they could, as I'm sure my colleagues did.

I guess what I'm talking about here is that I'm not expecting that this is going to be the same old way of doing business. I don't really think that's why this government was elected. I certainly know a couple of members on the opposite very well, because I worked with them before they ever came to Queen's Park. If they're stuck with the same old way of doing business, I can tell you right now—they don't have to speak for themselves—that they won't be happy about it, because that's not why they got elected. It wasn't their platform and it's not anything they stood for before in their other work. I would feel very badly if in fact that's the kind of direction that's been given.

1440

I don't know everybody, but I certainly know that no matter what side of the House, Mr Kormos, you and I would both agree that most people down here work honestly and in good faith, and none of us wants any marching orders. People of other political persuasions happen to be sometimes, on a day-to-day basis, our good friends. I certainly want to put that on the public record. I can speak from this side of the table, because most of us have been together. Many on the other side I don't know as well, but I certainly know three or four of you well.

Having said all of those things, this whole legislation went offtrack, and we're trying to bring it on track with the public hearings, in my view. We're still reminded about the community consultations where individuals were given five minutes to make their presentation—

Mr Huget: Not true.

Mrs Cunningham: Don't say "not true," because I was at the hearings in London where people were given five minutes to make their presentations. They continued for over a week and they continued on after I brought it to the attention of not only the minister but the staff. I will say that in the later weeks of public hearings, depending on the municipality, people were given a fairer opportunity, but not always. So the public presentations weren't met with a lot of respect or, for want of a better word, there wasn't a lot of hope or faith in what would happen as a result. Given what we did see in this bill, I think some people were not wrong. As a result, we've had some three weeks of public hearings where we've had numbers of opportunities to ask questions and get some good advice.

The three premises of this bill that I feel will be the biggest problems with regard to finding a solution and getting things up and going are, first of all, the makeup of the OTAB board itself. I feel badly—and I'm going to put it on record—that I think the public was totally misled in the consultations. They were advised that the hearings were on the local boards and not on the governing body itself; therefore, during the deliberations on the local

boards we didn't get a lot of input around the governing body itself. But I will say that during these hearings we did, and in the end, I think we have to say it worked in that regard. At least during the public hearings at Queen's Park, we did get the kind of information that we thought would be helpful—and divergent points of view.

The second part of this legislation that will be of great concern to the public in terms of getting our training up and going and having the partners work together is with regard to the local boards themselves. We have struggled significantly with the input, and I'm not certain, in terms of our amendment to section 18—I would ask the government to take a good look at this—whether we've gone far enough. But we have in good faith put forward an amendment to section 18 with regard to the composition and the operation and the role of OTAB, and we would expect that the government would look at it seriously and perhaps come back with amendments of its own.

I do feel that the legislation around local training and adjustment boards, the councils and reference committees, must be more inclusive, because those are the people we really will rely on to give us the best advice and to motivate the trainers, whether they be school boards, colleges or universities or private or public trainers. Those boards are going to be the success story for Ontario, in my view, and I feel we have to give them more direction. We're not sure if we've done that with our amendments. I think we've agreed, Mr Chairman, that from time to time we can make even more amendments, and I thank you for that.

I think the third part, that hasn't been mentioned in any way, is this whole funding mechanism. Quite frankly, we weren't certain how to deal with it. We are asking the question now that the funding be explained to us at some time during the hearings. It don't expect it to be verbal, but how does the government expect the funding to take place? Will this be federal dollars that are flowed directly to the OTAB board and directly to the local boards, or will it be federal and provincial funding that will flow only from the OTAB board? We would like some direction on that, because we would later in the week like to work with the government around some amendments that could clarify that or, if it doesn't clarify it, at least get it on the record as to how the funding's going to work.

Mr Chairman, my Liberal colleagues were very upset with the number of amendments that came forward. I hope through the questioning I gave at the beginning of the meeting that you can understand how upset we were. But my hopes and the hopes of my colleagues may be raised somewhat, given that the government said it's going to give serious consideration to our amendments and that at least the members I'm looking at on the other side didn't come to this Legislative Assembly to do business in the same old way. So we're expecting positive responses to our amendments, as reflected by the input.

With that, my colleague Elizabeth Witmer from Waterloo North, who is our Labour critic and who has also a keen interest in our party in Education and Training, Colleges and Universities, and chairs our subcommittee, will be making some remarks on our behalf as well.

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): Thank you very much. The biggest disappointment I face today was to see that, after hearing more than 100 excellent presentations and receiving many more, the government has seen fit to only incorporate one small amendment. I'm frankly quite appalled.

I have a feeling of *déjà vu*. It reminds me of Bill 40, when we sat for days and days, travelled this province; we had people spend weeks putting together excellent presentations. This government, who promised when it was elected that there would be consultation, that there would be consensus, has indicated in Bill 40 and I feel again today in this Bill 96 that it really is not interested in listening to the people of Ontario. We are being paid daily—for what, I don't know.

I can't believe that you couldn't have found some recommendations within the content of the presentations that were made to you in the last three weeks. Why do we spend the money, why do we spend the time, when this is all you have? Having gone through the Bill 40 process, I know that both the Liberals and ourselves introduced numerous amendments. Each one was rejected. I am not optimistic that you're going to accept any of our amendments at all. I hope you will, but I have to tell you that I'm not convinced that there will be any change.

We have a bill before us that was going to create a more knowledgeable, highly skilled and adaptable workforce, a bill that was going to get people trained to improve Ontario's competitiveness, to improve the social order in this province. Yet there's criticism of the bill because the bill before us is certainly not what was originally intended.

There were some excellent suggestions made as to how to change the composition, how to make it more accountable. There needs to be some accountability: Is this body really going to be accountable to the taxpayers and electorate in this province, or is this going to be another Workers' Compensation Board that's going to be a complete drain and going to hinder job creation and prevent any creation of a highly skilled and adaptable workforce?

I am very concerned that the government has not listened to the voices of the many hundreds and thousands of people who were represented in the presentations we've heard to date. I only can hope that you will respond to some of the excellent amendments that have been put forward by our caucus, and I know Mr Ramsay has amendments as well. I hope you will do what Bob Rae promised when he was elected: I hope you will listen, I hope you will consider, and I hope you will compromise and at least meet us halfway.

The Chair: Thank you kindly. We'll have a five-minute recess before Mr Wilson makes his statement. Thank you.

The committee recessed at 1450 and resumed at 1502.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much, Mr Kormos. I want to thank our colleagues from the non-government section for their comments. I know I speak for my colleagues when I say that we appreciate the work they've done. To respond to Ms Cunningham's remarks that there

were parts she enjoyed, I think that we all have enjoyed this part, the hearings to this point. I look forward to further enjoyment as we discuss the clause-by-clause.

Mrs Cunningham: I don't know if that's a good choice of word: "enjoyment."

Mr Gary Wilson: Really? I thought I was following from what you were saying.

Mrs Cunningham: Probably "interesting."

Mr Ramsay: So Diane's amendments are more enjoyable than mine?

Mrs Cunningham: You'd better be careful.

Mr Huget: Who has the floor, Mr Chair?

The Chair: Mr Wilson does. I guess that's up to him.

Mr Gary Wilson: It just shows the hazards of listening. We can all hear something but don't necessarily interpret it in the same way. I think some of that might become clear as we look at the clause-by-clause.

In particular, I want to mention her comments about finding this process to be business as usual. I thought one of the major factors in the discussion of Bill 96 is that the consultation that occurred beforehand with the people involved, with whom the government will be sharing responsibility in labour market training and adjustment, itself was a departure from past experience. We tried to make sure that the things that were included in the bill were things the labour market partners wanted to see there. Then one of the purposes of the committee hearings was to vet that legislation to see that it did in fact suit the needs of Ontario in ways we thought were important.

I would hope that, just as the labour market partners themselves brought diverse views to the consultation, we as three political parties will come together to see that this legislation is the vehicle to bring about a training structure that will meet the needs of all Ontarians.

So before we begin the clause-by-clause review of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, I'd like to make some general observations about these public hearings and the consultative work that preceded them, as well as emphasizing a few key aspects of the legislation.

I'm sure my colleagues on this committee will agree with me that these hearings have been very valuable and informative. The presentations we have heard make up an excellent body of commentary on issues of labour force development in Ontario in general and on Bill 96 in particular.

I'd like to thank all the people who took the time to share their opinions and suggestions with the resources development committee and also to thank the committee members for their hard work in closely following these presentations. We have heard during the public hearings how people's training needs vary by region, by sector, by job, and reflect the diversity of our population.

We've also seen the wide variety of training methods, delivery systems and providers that exist in Ontario. It would be difficult to conclude from these hearings that there is a single preferred way to teach skills or a single way to set up a training or adjustment program that would

address everyone's needs. That is where our greatest challenge lies.

In order to develop a training and adjustment system that can serve a province as vast and varied as Ontario, there are two contrasting requirements that we have to keep in mind. There is the need, on one hand, for an effective and efficient province-wide system that is consistently fair in the way it serves people. There is also the need, on the other hand, to ensure the system will be a flexible and dynamic mechanism that can take into account the fact that different users have different needs, a mechanism which can evolve and adapt to Ontario's changing needs over years to come.

Therefore, in drafting this bill, the government's task has been to carefully weigh a variety of suggestions and strike a balance. Virtually every community and workplace in Ontario will be affected by the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board as it addresses the needs of employers, workers and those who want to work. If we focus too much on any one group's interests, we run the risk of upsetting the balance that will benefit us all.

It's worth repeating that there has been general agreement, both within this committee and in presentations we have heard, on the need to improve the current training and adjustment system. When these hearings began, Mr Ramsay told us that, in his opinion, "Everybody in the province understands the importance of training today." He said, "We're going to have to really address, as we never have before, the question of training."

As the member's comment suggests, the goals of this bill are less at issue than how we are to accomplish them. The evidence indicates that people clearly support the major underlying principles of this government's reform effort. In particular, the need for cooperation among the people who at times in the past have worked at cross-purposes is well understood, and I think this is very encouraging and refreshing.

I'm reminded, for example, of the remark made by Ms Cunningham, who said that she "considers training to be a particularly non-partisan responsibility of both the private sector and government." I agree with that statement, and I am convinced that if we in government share that sense of mutual responsibility, and if we consider the responsibilities as well as the aspirations of all our labour market partners, then OTAB is certain to succeed.

The effect of this strong support for OTAB's goals is that the presentations to this committee have focused on details, specific concerns and the fine-tuning of the proposed OTAB. They have tended not to question the wisdom of the whole reform effort. I would ask that we all not lose sight of just how much support we have for this undertaking.

Before I comment on some of the proposed amendments, I want to say that, in my opinion, one of the most important and remarkable aspects of Bill 96 is the work that went into consulting with the labour market partners steering committees. The primary objective of the bill, which is to enable the labour market partners to play a significant role in the design and delivery of labour force development programs and services, was made credible

for all partners by ensuring their involvement right from the beginning.

This was not token involvement after something had already been drafted. It was essential to allow the partners to tell us up front what they wanted to see in OTAB, for two main reasons: First, so that at the end of the day the agency we had created would have their support; and second, so that the partners could begin to listen and work together and start to develop the trust and the structures for cooperation that would be essential for OTAB to function. In many ways, this bill is the first tangible product of the labour market partners working together.

These steering committees have been in place for over a year now. During the hearings, we heard about the work they have done: the outreach and the networking they undertook, often on their own initiative without any kind of agenda imposed on them by government; the hundreds of hours of meetings that have been held; the ground that has been broken, such as being able to bring together all five broad categories of educators and trainers for the first time; and the spinoffs that were created, such as the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition, with over 800 members.

1510

OTAB is not yet a reality, and already we have structures to get people involved and to address labour force development in Ontario where no comparable structures existed before. This is real progress, and if the details of this progress aren't written explicitly into this bill, the results of it most certainly are.

It was June 1992, five months after the partners formed these steering committees, that they began their work on a draft statement of OTAB's mandate to clarify what they wanted to see in the legislation. It was another three months, September 1992, before the job of drafting Bill 96 began. In close cooperation with the labour market partners, and using this draft mandate statement as its blueprint, government proceeded to draw up Bill 96, even going so far as to share early draft wording of it with all the members of the steering committees.

My point is that a considerable amount of negotiation and tradeoffs have already taken place. It's not unlike the kind of negotiation that goes on in the Legislature among the three parties, as I'm sure my colleagues on the committee can appreciate. The House leaders start by presenting their list of priorities to each other and then proceed to develop agreements on how to take care of some matters right away, while conceding that other matters may have to wait or may have to be addressed in some other fashion.

This is how the work of government gets done: by compromise, balance, being realistic and reasonable about what can be achieved and by recognizing the legitimate aspirations of others. We all know full well that we still have our job to do, of course, and when the House is in session we expect that we will all bring to the Legislature the distinctive views of our respective constituencies. To listen to MPPs in the House speaking for the public record, the staunch support we hear for a variety of contrasting positions may some times seem to belie the negotiation and cooperation that have already taken place.

The same is true of the preparation to draft Bill 96. Long before the resources development committee saw this bill, some priorities were spelled out, some negotiation took place and a balance was achieved by the labour market partners. They served notice to each other about where they could compromise and where they had to stand firm if they were to do a good job of representing their larger labour market partner group. I think the partners proved that they are reasonable people willing to exhibit some flexibility on certain things, provided that their closest concerns are addressed to their satisfaction.

As the public hearings proceeded, we saw many of the people who have been working on this partnership for over a year come before us to go on record and reiterate their original position. These people want, quite naturally, to see amendments that will reflect most closely their own views, not out of self-interest but because they believe their suggestions will make OTAB better. This is as normal and natural as the contrasting assertions of MPPs in the House.

But in light of comments that have been made questioning the willingness of these groups to cooperate, it's worth repeating that in September, October and November 1992, they were clearly able to find some common ground that they could map out together in this bill, or we wouldn't be here today. If people are still sceptical about how non-partisan Bill 96 is, I can only say that in all likelihood this bill might look quite different if this government had written it without the help of all the labour market partners.

But I am convinced that the decision to develop OTAB in this non-traditional, very inclusive manner, with the help of a diversity of partners, is wise and prudent, because we need each other. The health of our economy and the future of our labour force is based on the interdependency of the labour market partners. The whole question of labour force development is too complex and important to allow it to be addressed purely from the perspective of any single political interest.

Let's keep that in mind as we consider the amendments proposed by those who came before the committee. What I found striking about them is the way they reflect a variety of contrasting perspectives, with no single emphasis on any one aspect of the bill. That, to me, indicates that we have done a pretty good job of finding that elusive balance and coming down in the middle between opposite views.

Take for example, the question of how much control government would have over OTAB. Some would like to see very little control, such as the Whitby Chamber of Commerce, which recommended the removal of the requirement in subsection 1(d) that OTAB must work within the economic and social policies of government and the removal of the minister's prerogative to issue written directives to OTAB in subsection 5(1). Similarly, the Belleville and District Chamber of Commerce told us that OTAB should not be limited to, or subject to, the policy direction of government, as is proposed in clause 4(2)(a). On the other hand, both the Mississauga Board of Trade and Samia Lambton Chamber of Commerce have suggested that subsection 4(2) doesn't go far enough. Their concern was echoed by the Ontario Women's Action on Training

Coalition, which wanted more specific mention of public accountability.

With respect to social goals and economic goals, right from the start OTAB has been grounded in the principle that the two are complementary and interrelated. The steering committees discussed this principle extensively, but it's not surprising that people still feel strongly about the question.

Paragraph 4(1)9 says that one of OTAB's objects is, "To seek to ensure access and equity in labour force development programs and services." Yet we heard from the Northwestern Ontario Women's Decade Council, the Ontario Women's Action on Training Coalition and others that they want stronger language in support of these social goals and would like this amended to read "To ensure access and equity." On the other hand, the phrase "the improvement of the lives of workers" in clause 1(b) and paragraph 4(1)5 raised concerns for the OTAB business steering committee, the Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto and the Ontario Federation of Agriculture, among others. They thought the language didn't focus sufficiently on economic goals.

The choice of language that went into this bill was described well by Jim Turk of the Ontario Federation of Labour. As he told this committee, "Business wanted reference to competitiveness and productivity and we wanted reference to training that improved the lives of workers and potential workers, so the bill, in a true compromise fashion, has come up with language that includes both."

Another area of great interest during the hearings was the question of representation. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce wanted more seats for business. The Union of Mechanical Contractors wanted another seat for labour. The Toronto School of Business wanted two more seats for both business and labour, along with three more seats for educators and trainers. We heard requests that there be seats for youth, for injured workers, for non-organized workers, for multicultural francophones, for agriculture, and even for qualified individuals who are not members of identifiable groups—and this is a partial list.

All I can say is that if we tried to accommodate everyone's desire for direct representation, the governing body would swell to an unmanageable size. Let's remember that the job of these directors will not be to protect their own turf. They'll have a responsibility to the whole province. Frankly, if, as part of their job, directors are required to start taking into account the aspirations of people whose interests they haven't historically considered, then all the better for encouraging cooperation. As I said earlier, we're already making good progress along this path.

It has been exciting to see the interest that has been expressed in local boards. That indicates to me how eager people are to make them work. But I disagree that we should spell out all the details about them in this bill. OTAB's governing body, as we know, is not in place yet, and if we make all the key decisions about local boards without its input, then I believe we are contradicting the spirit of Bill 96 to ensure that we include the perspective of the labour market partners.

The OTAB governing body will have to work out its share of the specifics, in accordance with all the checks and balances built into Bill 96. Incidentally, those checks and balances are more extensive than any legislative or regulatory framework that exists for community and industrial training committees. Therefore, I feel confident that local boards will be able to greatly improve the ability of people in communities to assist each other with their labour force development requirements, and they will be able to do so in a fair and equitable manner right across the province.

We must also bear in mind that local boards will have a joint responsibility for training and adjustment funded by another level of government. They will work to give the people of Ontario simplified, coordinated access to both provincial and federal labour force development programs and services. To respect the intent of this bill to encourage cooperation, we need our federal partners and OTAB's governing body to address the details of local boards together with this government.

I'll conclude with one last request: I would like the members of this committee, in reviewing the individual clauses of Bill 96, to keep sight of the overall objective. I hope that by keeping in mind the greater goal of improving our province's labour force development system, we can see beyond individual interests. I hope we can see how everyone has had to make some sacrifices for us to get this far; everyone has had to revise their image of the ideal training and adjustment board for Ontario. But if the image of what OTAB will be, as put forth in Bill 96, does not exactly reflect the wishes of all groups, we should be encouraged that it does in fact reflect a balanced view of what all Ontario wants to see.

I hope there's some time for my colleagues who would like to make some remarks.

1520

Mr Sutherland: I don't want to make too many more comments; I think Mr Wilson has covered them.

In terms of responding to some of the criticism from the opposition, I think it's important to note that many of the presentations and the comments we heard dealt with issues that may not be specifically related to the legislation but related more to the operational details of how the training and adjustment board should conduct itself, how it should relate to local boards. Certainly that message came through time and time again, and of course all that information is on the public record and will provide useful input into how that gets to be developed.

I think it's important to put that into context when opposition members say we haven't got a significant number of amendments that have been put forward; and to remember that the process for developing this legislation, as Mr Wilson has pointed out, is different than has been used for developing other pieces of legislation, quite frankly, in terms of the amount of work done with consultation groups and reference groups in a more formal way than maybe is done with other legislation.

For the record, I think those two points need to be made to balance some of the comments made by the opposition members.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Malkowski.

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): I listened carefully this afternoon to the comments by the members of the opposition and I think some of the comments are important to consider, although I think it's also important for you to listen to the government's side as well, to make sure we develop a good, effective model and legislation that will work for everyone. I'm sure that in a good spirit we can all work together.

It's important that we have legislation that works for everybody in the province, and I'm confident we can do that and will make every effort we can to listen to not only the community but also the opposition members, and to reflect the concerns of the community to make sure that's seen in the legislation. We'll take a look at whatever situations we can as things come up through clause-by-clause with your amendments. Hopefully, we can review this again and improve upon it more and more through discussion. But again, I think it's important to keep in mind the objectives of the whole purpose of OTAB, and I would hope we can be a little less partisan and work together on this.

The Chair: I propose that we go now to section 1 of the bill. Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chair, in section 1 of the bill, we see that—

The Chair: Do you have a motion?

Mr Ramsay: You want me to go through the motion? Okay.

I move that section 1 of the bill be amended by adding the following clause:

"(a.1) To facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation."

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Do you want to speak to that?

Mr Ramsay: Yes, I would. Many groups came before the committee during the three weeks we had hearings to say that, in the government's attempt after the consultation which it did pursue—and I applaud the government for doing that consultation—after all of that, in order to appease the many, many various voices it heard, it has developed a set of purposes for this act that become rather wishy-washy, to be polite. It lacks sharp focus.

Instead of eliminating a lot of the purposes that are there, I have in subsequent amendments touched upon a few of the other clauses under section 1. But what I wanted to do is to add something a little pithy, a little sharp, very direct and to the point, without disturbing a lot of the language that's there, which I find a little unfocused and so all-encompassing. My concern is that OTAB, with the tremendous number of resources it is going to have at its disposal, has such a smorgasbord of purposes before it that it's going to be very difficult for the board to really start to give itself some focus to its primary goal.

To me, it's as if the purposes as set out in these four subsections of 1 should have been crafted in a preamble, possibly, to the bill that really gave a feel for what the bill's object was and the tenor in which it's meant. In a sense, the words here, "just society," which I haven't seen before in conjunction with this government or the governing party—anyway, there are the words "just society," but to get the feel of what it is intended OTAB do for society, it should maybe have been put in a preamble. Then we would have put out more exactly and explicitly and more directly the hard purpose of this bill, and it really is "to facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis of wealth and job creation."

That's the way you improve workers' lives and the lives of potential workers in Ontario: to rebuild the economy, as we all know we have to do. The government has seized upon the fact, and I agree with it, that the main pillar that's needed to be put in place to rebuild that economy is to make sure that all Ontarians have the skills that are going to be required.

That's why we're here, because we all realize now, as the economy is starting to blossom again, that we are starting to see a problem we really haven't suffered before in Ontario, and that's called the skills gap. There are new jobs being developed and there are some very high-paying jobs being developed. These are now becoming available to people in our province, but what we see is that we're starting to develop a shortage of skilled people to take on those new jobs, and that's a problem; that's a big problem. In fact, that's going to be our challenge, because what we're seeing is the nature of work in Ontario and this country and around the world changing, and that's a tremendous challenge for us.

So in moving this amendment as an add-on, without affecting anything else that's there in the purposes at this particular time, I'd like to see this very direct and highly focused goal put into the purpose clause so that we really give a focused direction for OTAB, so that when we get all those people together representing all their varying interests from right across the province, from all various sectors of the economy, both public and private sector, they're going to look down at their purpose, at their goal, and they've got a sentence to focus on, that that's what they're about, that's the duty they've been charged with: to create a highly skilled workforce in Ontario so that every Ontarian has the opportunity to take advantage of those jobs that will be created. And if we are highly skilled and have a competitive labour force in Ontario—in fact, it's a bit of the chicken and the egg—we will start to attract investors who will take advantage of a highly skilled workforce.

It's extremely important that we bring some sharp focus to the purpose of this bill before we start to argue about the process and how many people on the board and where they come from and who they represent. We need to ensure a successful outcome of OTAB and its continued success in trying to bring everybody together to work in partnership. We've got to give them strong, highly focused direction. That's why I have moved this clause, and I'd ask the committee to support it.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Ramsay. Mr Wilson.

1530

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you, Mr Ramsay, for your remarks about this amendment. I guess the first thing to be said is, who considers what is focused? You find it more focused to have this addition made, whereas through consultation and in fact in the committee hearings, I think to a great extent the focus that is found in clause 1(b), where it speaks about "lead to the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation" etc, provides the focus that you're suggesting is lacking. Done in this way, another aspect of "focus" is what does jump into view. And the concern about the setting, shall we call it, of what workers will be living in is very important too; that is, what kind of society we are creating through our skills development.

I know you spoke to that yourself when you talked about a skills gap, which I'm not quite sure—that's a term I didn't hear a lot during the hearings, I have to say. "Skills gap" suggests things like "missile gap" that a few years ago appeared to come out of nowhere. While there might be a skills gap, certainly it hasn't developed recently but over a number of years, which is what we're trying to address here, by looking to see what didn't work in the past, bringing together the people who need the training and who will be needing it for their plants—the employers, that is—to address the question of where we need training and what kind of programs there should be.

As I say, I don't think the word "focus"—it might be more focused for you, but it leaves out things that I think are important to several of the labour market partners that we have to make sure are there so that the kind of training we come up with will meet everyone's needs.

The Chair: Ms Witmer, please.

Mrs Witmer: I would be very supportive of this amendment to section 1, that we would add the following clause: "to facilitate the development of a more knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation."

I think, Mr Wilson, this would be in addition to what is already there, and I think it simply makes it more precise. In fact, I believe that although the OTAB concept that was put forward in the original green paper was a stimulating, very thought-provoking proposal that certainly has given this province and the people who have dealt with it some insight into the challenges and some of the solutions, I think what is missing in the final draft of Bill 96—and I think it was mentioned by various presenters that the original objective was exactly what Mr Ramsay has indicated: to facilitate the development of this knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation.

That was the original objective, and unfortunately Bill 96 at the present time is disturbingly reluctant to state this case. I wonder why, because if we take a look, we have many skilled positions in our province at present for which we have no employees to fill those positions. What we need to be doing is providing opportunities for those people who have been pushed out of the manufacturing jobs they've been in for years. We need to provide them

with the knowledge, with the skills in order to fill those jobs that are now begging for people to fill them.

Also, if we have a highly skilled labour force, we will have people looking at Ontario as an area of investment. We don't have to be afraid of them going to Mexico. If we have the knowledge and we have the skills and the competitive labour force—we know our people are highly motivated, they're energetic, they're hardworking—we will, as a result, have investment come to this province. We will see people who are presently here expand their operation and not look to the US or to Mexico, because they know that they can compete because of the labour force we have.

I'll tell you, that is the only way we're going to have wealth in this province, it's the only way that we're going to have more job creation, and it's the only way this government is going to be able to afford the social safety net it seems so intent on providing for the people in this province, which we'd all like to see. But if we don't have this highly skilled workforce, we're never going to have wealth, we're not going to see much new job creation and, as a result, we can't create that safety net.

So I would certainly support strongly the inclusion of this very precise statement. I regret that it was omitted, because I think originally the intent was that it would be included within the document.

Mr Offer: Mr Chair, I didn't hear in his comments whether the parliamentary assistant was prepared to accept the amendment put forward by the opposition.

The Chair: Are you putting that question to him now, or do you want him to reserve that answer with his response?

Mr Offer: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: No, we're not going to accept it.

Mr Offer: Thank you. In speaking to the motion, hopefully to change your mind so that the members of the government will follow your lead, I think you have to recognize that the essence of the amendment is to insert a focus into the legislation. When you look at the amendment, you will see the words "adding the following clause." There is nothing in this amendment which takes away from the existing clauses, but rather adds to what is in the legislation.

What is the substantive point in the amendment? It talks about job creation. It talks about a skilled and competitive labour force that will form the basis for job creation. As I make this argument, I think you will know that in your riding, in your constituency office, as well as all of our ridings and constituency offices, probably the single greatest issue before our constituents, for the people that elected us, is job creation.

There are a great many people out of work, many for the very first time in their lives. There is a significant number of people who are employed but fear that the job they have today may not be there tomorrow. This amendment is designed to put a focus in this legislation to meet the concerns of the people of the province on the issue that is the number one issue in all our minds.

By not accepting this amendment, we are putting—unwittingly, I believe—a secondary or tertiary nature to job

creation and retraining. I believe that people see those things as very much hand in hand.

You will know, as the parliamentary assistant, that these words put forward by Mr Ramsay were also words that were echoed by the business steering committee in OTAB, the group of men and women from the business sector that had been specifically charged with the responsibility of fleshing out the concept of OTAB. This I believe to be their number one position: that when we look at training and retraining and adjustment in this province, we must put in an enhanced need for job creation.

When OTAB was first devised—I believe it came probably in the late 1980s, and we have to realize that the job market, even from just the late 1980s, has dramatically changed. No longer can we use an idea of the late 1980s, with a model which I believe is probably reminiscent of the 1960s or the 1970s, to deal with the issues of the 1990s. This amendment and this proposal have, as their hoped-for gain, a focus towards what will be the challenges of the 1990s.

1540

We are not looking at OTAB—I would hope, at least, that we are not looking at it this way—as some sort of amalgamation of existing programs, thank you very much. We are not looking at OTAB as akin to amalgamating a variety of grocery stores so that when people shop they can go to one facility. The fact of the matter is that what we should be looking at is a different product, that in many cases it's not training somebody for a job that's here, it's preparing somebody for a job that will be here. If OTAB is nothing more than an amalgamation, one-stop shopping for training in the province, I think it's very different from how it was envisaged in the first place. If it is just to be an amalgamation or one-stop shopping, there may be some who find something useful in that, and maybe there is, but let's not raise expectations.

If it's just going to be a one-stop shopping mechanism which is going to be overseen by a group of business and labour and equity groups, well, let's say that's what it is. But if we are saying it's going to be something different, that it's going to be something new, that it's not going to be something that exists in other jurisdictions, then let's insert this focus, because this is the issue that is before our constituents. This is the issue that confronts the small business person today. This is the issue that is paramount in the minds of the workers of this province.

It would seem to me folly to deal with a training regime without encompassing the issue that is front and centre in the minds of the men and working women of this province. That's job creation. Job creation, to those employed today, is not just for someone else because they have a job; job creation today is an assurance, a security towards the jobs they have now, and that there is going to be growth in the economy.

If we don't build that into the OTAB legislation, then we say that this legislation is an amalgamation of existing training programs. As you know, we have documents that show it's not even going to be an amalgamation of all existing training programs, that very few indeed are going to be amalgamated. If that's going to be the case, then let it

be the case. But let's not send out an expectation that this is going to be something new and different. In fact, this could be very much less.

The steering committee of the business sector that the government set up indicated that this would be important. From that phrase "job creation" will come the need to predict where the job market is going to be. It's going to introduce a whole new series of variables in dealing with training, and it will make the foundation for something different from what now exists in the province.

I think you will know from the hearings that I have some significant reservations with the structure of the legislation and indeed with the purpose. I can tell you that some of the reservations I have would be dealt with if one will insert this phrase, because to me, it does then send the message that when "job creation" is inserted, we are: first, dealing with the issue that is first and foremost in people's minds; second, that we are laying the foundation, the structure, for a different type of training program, that we are going to be looking more to tomorrow than yesterday, that this is not just going to be an amalgamation of existing programs, that we are not going to be content with having just a one-stop training regime for people who need it; that though it may be important, we're going to be going further than that.

But if you don't accept this amendment, you will of necessity stop that type of endeavour. You will of necessity stop looking at the job market in terms of predicting what will be necessary to train our workforce, to put in motion a training program to deal with the challenges of tomorrow. Without this amendment, that is stopped. You will be, without any question, dealing only with an amalgamation of existing training programs—indeed, an incomplete amalgamation of training programs—and missing the challenge.

I would hope that you would look upon this amendment as one that has not just been put forward by my colleague Mr Ramsay and our party but also supported by the third party, and also one which has been developed by individuals and groups who have been working with this legislation from its inception, from the germ of an idea. It is the end product of years of dealing with how best to meet the demands of tomorrow. It opens the door to a different day; it opens the door to a more progressive, reflective, responsive and adaptive training process for all the people of the province.

By rejecting this, you say, "More of the same." It will be a different structure, a different regime, but in essence, more of the same. I do not believe that more of the same will meet the needs of the 1990s. So I would hope that maybe you would consider supporting this amendment, remembering that it takes nothing away from that which exists in the legislation but rather adds to it with a focus and a hope and an energy to meet the training needs of the future.

Mr Gary Wilson: I am pleased to hear in some of your remarks, Mr Offer, that you do at least appreciate the goals that we have for OTAB, that is, to make a more responsive, flexible—

Mr Offer: I didn't say that.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's what I heard you say about the kind of training structure we need now. How we achieve that is the point at issue here. It seems to me that you're discounting the effort of the labour market partners by suggesting that this, the model they've come up with, after all, represents something that's outmoded. Who better knows the things that are needed in today's workplace as far as training goes than the people who are actually needing the training and are paying for it, in effect; paying for it through lost jobs, as you point out, in one way. These are the people we are sharing the responsibility with in terms of coming up with the kind of structure we need here, and this has developed after a lot of consultation.

1550

From another angle, even to put in the amendment you suggest lacks the focus you appear to be trying to achieve. That is, it's included already in clause 1(b), where it talks about the very kinds of skills and goals you hope to get through the kinds of training we're going to get in the province. As I pointed out in my remarks and as we've heard in the committee hearings, people are concerned about the kind of training we've had in the past.

We think it can be improved, and certainly one way of improving it, we think, is by bringing the people who are affected by training, who need it, around the table to make the decisions on what kind of training there should be. By coming together, they've come up with this kind of language that includes not only the competitive aspects, say, of an economy that is active and growing, but also the social equity aspects as well. There is a lot of agreement already on how we should be proceeding by people who are actually in the workplace right now, so I don't think you can get much more contemporary than that.

As the idea you've raised in the amendment is already there in clause 1(b), I don't see any reason for including this, other than to muddy the issue and to throw off the balance that has already been achieved through consultation with the labour market partners.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Wilson, the more you speak, the more frustrated I get, because you are not understanding what I'm trying to do here. I'm going to try again.

I'll just tell you, of all the purposes you've got there, I do not disagree with any of them. What I'm telling you is to try to bring some clarity and some organization. This is a poorly crafted piece of legislation in this purpose clause, because you are confusing values and purposes; you've got strategy mixed in there, you've got a mission statement mixed in there. It's all good stuff, but it needs to be sorted out and made clear.

I'm saying there's nothing in there that I object to, except that it's all bunched up in a *mélange* in a purpose clause. It needs to be sorted out and reorganized in a preamble, a mission statement, some objectives, some strategy of how the thing should work, how people should work together. It's all good stuff. It's just such a mix, a jumble.

You say in answer to my amendment to bring some focus that it's down here in clause 1(b). It's buried at the

end. A good piece of legislation should be like writing a press release: Why would you bury the lead? If this is the purpose, then that should be up front. And it's in such airy-fairy, non-action words. Why not some action words there, that this bill is to facilitate the development of a highly trained workforce for Ontarians?

I'm not against anything else you've got here, but let's sort it out so that there's a clear goal and purpose for OTAB. We're going to bring, to begin with, a bunch of amateurs together, which is great, because we've got the people in the field who aren't professional bureaucrats who are going to be working with this. We want them to develop into a well-trained and educated group of people who can make recommendations on behalf of all working people in Ontario. So we need to give them a good document that's clear and concise and easy to follow. This should be a road map; it should be clear. We need to lay it out in a better way, we need a good mission statement, and then we need some objectives and the purpose of this bill spelled out so that it's clear, so that it gives them focus and they understand what they're doing there. It's just such a muddle here to sort through all of this.

The very first purpose is basically a strategy to enable business and labour to work together. Well, we all agree with that and that should be in there and that's what we want to facilitate here, but that's not the number one purpose of this bill; surely it isn't the number one purpose. It's maybe number two or maybe number three to get all folks working together in Ontario, but isn't the very first purpose to make sure we develop a highly trained workforce in this province?

Surely that's got to be the number one: a skilled and competitive workforce to make sure we that we form the basis of job creation and wealth creation. We need to create wealth in this province so that we can further develop the social programs we all care about in this province. All of us do. We want to make sure they're not eroded any more than they are today, and obviously we'd like to, as our priorities change, maybe develop some new ones. In order to do that, you have to develop wealth. That's what I mean by "wealth" there. We need to have a wealthy society where people are highly paid. To do that today, as we all know, we have to be highly skilled.

That's what I'm saying to you. I'm begging you to sort this out. Nothing in there do I disagree with, but I want some clarity with it, and I'm trying to offer some suggestions. If the government would say, "We'll look at the purpose clause and sort it all out so it has more order and more clarity," then I will forgo my amendments to that whole purpose section if the government would say that. I feel so strongly about that. It's a mix of mission statement, statement of principles and strategies and purposes all in a jumble.

It's all great stuff, it's all motherhood and we all agree with it. Let's sort it out and make it clear and concise so that when we get OTAB together there's a clear road map there to follow so we can all accomplish these goals that I think all of us in this room believe in.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd like to say briefly that you draw the analogy with a news release, and I don't see it. It has a

little more substance than that. It isn't a news release, it's a piece of legislation, and the purposes are clearly laid out here in four relatively short paragraphs; one's two and a half lines long. Why you say this is muddled—I'm not quite sure what the problem there is.

The reason the lead is the way it is—there is no lead. It's to reflect the kind of balance we came up with in consultation with the labour market partners. I'm a bit concerned that you would call them amateurs. I know that's in contradiction to the civil servants, and I don't think it takes anything away from them to say that the people actually in the field have a lot of knowledge, and that's what we're tapping into. I think the way it's set out here in the purposes clearly shows everyone, the people involved as well as the people of Ontario, what we're trying to achieve in this legislation. I'm afraid I just don't see anything to be gained, in fact something to be lost, from the inclusion of your amendment.

Mr Offer: I've listened intently to the response by the parliamentary assistant to Mr Ramsay's position, and I believe that the parliamentary assistant is making a fundamental error in this area, an error which is going to carry on throughout the legislation. The error rests in the fact that you are looking at the purposes and thinking of the structure. There are other sections that deal with the structure and the makeup, and you can be certain there will be significant comment on the structure. The worst thing you can do is make an error by thinking structure when you are looking at purpose.

We will deal with the structure as to what the board is in its makeup. We will be looking at who it is that will carry out the purpose of the legislation. But don't deal with that issue when we are talking about what it is that group is going to be dealing with. We are just looking at the purposes of the legislation. We are asking that whatever the structure is in the final instance—hopefully, it will be changed, as an aside—but whatever that structure is, whatever that organization of men and women happens to be, we want it to deal with certain purposes of the legislation.

We have asked that one of the things they look at is job creation, a skilled and competitive labour force. Who looks after that will be a debate in the next few days. What it is they are going to be looking at is before us now, and this amendment is crucial to what it is they are going to be looking at. It is not a matter of who is going to be looking, but rather, what are the areas, what's the subject matter, what is the goal in the areas they're going to be looking at?

1600

This amendment adds a purpose to the legislation. It adds it in such a way that it focuses some of the things that group is going to be looking at. When you say specifically, as I've heard you say, that you are going to vote against it, I have a feeling—though I might be surprised—that after this debate, maybe your government colleagues will vote in the same way you have voted. Maybe not. I hope they'll be listening to these arguments and seeing the reasons this is being put forward, recognizing that this is not just the amendment of an opposition party but rather an amendment which has been based on listening to people who

have been involved in this process from day one, probably involved in this process before any of us in this room were involved in this process. They have been involved in it. They have been dealing with it. They have seen what can be accomplished if certain purposes are embraced. This is one of them.

This amendment is one of those purposes, if embraced, which can provide and chart a course for training in this province that is responsive to the 1990s. We are not talking about who is going to be making those decisions; that is in another section. What we are talking about is the areas we wish them to address. It's clear. And so I would ask that if the parliamentary assistant isn't going to change his mind, maybe the members of the government will reflect on things they have heard during this committee hearing and support this amendment.

Mr Gary Wilson: You've heard my view, Mr Offer. Maybe we should ask my colleagues whether they want to say anything.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mr Sutherland.

Mr Sutherland: Just one quick comment. They've accused us of being motherhood in what's being put forward. I think you can make the argument about the amendment. Everybody understands that what's being proposed here is obviously to have an impact on job creation. That is understood, and when you look at clause 1(b) it also makes a reference to that. While I understand the point you are trying to make, I think reference to that has already been made in the legislation, so not supporting the amendment does not mean that we don't think that's important. I think it's referred to elsewhere in the legislation.

The Chair: Go ahead, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: I'd like to know who the "they" was in your comments. Who were you talking about when you said "they"?

Mr Sutherland: I was just referring to Mr Ramsay and Mr Offer in their comments.

Mrs Cunningham: My guess is that you've got the wrong "they," because I think we were very clearly given the "they."

The Chair: Who's "we"?

Mrs Cunningham: This whole committee is the "we" and all of us were given the "they." The "they" is not Mr Ramsay or Mr Offer or myself or my colleague Mr Witmer. The "they" is the business steering committee.

I'm going to go right back to what you said, Mr Wilson. You said that ample consultation took place, that in your view, you listened to the steering committees that advised you. Quite frankly, we took the parliamentary assistant's word for it at the beginning of the hearings, but after the hearings were over, it was made very clear to us that, as a matter of fact, the majority of the groups within the business steering group and other steering groups had other opinions.

This is a perfect example. Within the business steering group itself, and it was formed some 13 months ago, there were a number of members who had input to the consultation process and there were some 12 major business organi-

zations. We didn't hear from all of the business organizations here, but we heard from some of them. Within that group were the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce, the Metropolitan Toronto Board of Trade, the Retail Council of Canada, and there were other smaller groups within those groups that came before our committee. They really, in this instance, are in fact the business steering committee.

With due respect to your comments, this amendment is being put forward because a majority of the groups within that organization came forward and told us that this had to be clarified. Nobody's making it up. The researcher put the input down under the different titles, and we took a look at it. So before we go any further, I'd like the parliamentary assistant to talk to us about why the majority of the members of the business steering committee think this should be changed and your government doesn't. Tell me why not.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, it's in conjunction with what the other groups think. You have to admit, in a number of other presentations that were made, people were happy with this arrangement that is set out in the purposes.

I think my colleague raised the "they" in referring to Liberal members, to say that they referred to the motherhood nature of the things, as they called it.

I think people saw this as being a balanced way of including the purposes that each of the labour market partners would like to see the legislation deliver as far as OTAB goes. By including it in this way, it achieves that balance I mentioned in my opening remarks, about how we balance the interests of each of the partners. Individually, they might like to see it in a different way, but our job is to make sure that we reflect on and consider the points of view of the other labour market partners, because it would be unfair to them to make a decision just on the basis of hearing one group before us without considering what the others said and without looking at the legislation to see how the purposes are described and deciding then whether they include the goals of each of the labour market partners.

Mrs Cunningham: I want to get at the crux of what we're really talking about here, because this is the very beginning of amendments, and my colleagues are trying to reflect what they heard. Are we now supposed to assume that if you didn't sit as a member of one of the steering committees—because I could in this particular instance, in support of my colleagues, now go on to the education steering committee and give you the names of the people who came before this committee who were represented on the steering committee but found there were things on that committee that they didn't agree with. Should we then assume that anybody else who didn't happen to be members of the steering committee, if they took the time to come before this committee—the whole argument is, why do we have the public hearings?

If the steering committees are the be-all and end-all and they all came to some agreement and the whole thing was perfect, Mr Chairman, would you allow me, through you, to ask the parliamentary assistant, do we then take

away any of the work that has been done by the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition, the Association of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario—where they did agree within the group and didn't agree—the Women's Training Coalition, the Ontario Native Women's Association—I could go on and on and on.

Do we then say that anything they had to say isn't important because they were represented on the steering committee, and therefore we're not going to do anything about it? Is that what you're asking us to do? Because I need to know. I'm trying to get into this process here.

Mr Gary Wilson: Through you, Mr Chairperson, to Mrs Cunningham, the idea is that we want to vet this legislation to make sure it does represent the interests. What I'm suggesting is that by sitting on the committee over those three weeks of hearings, it put us in a good position to hear and to assess the presentations made by representatives of the labour market partners, in whatever form they were appearing or whatever their experience had been. As you point out, some were members of the steering committee; others hadn't much contact with the steering committee. But it was still, I think, valuable for us to hear their presentations to see how it met or how it fit in with the legislation, to see how it matched their view and what we could take away from what they were saying.

Mrs Cunningham: I must say, you must have had a very important group of people on all of your steering committees, because what you've told us today, at least so far, is that they were all right, and that everybody else who came, whether their associations were represented or not represented on the steering committees—that the input they gave to the success of the future training in this province is not worthy of your consideration.

Mr Gary Wilson: I thought I was saying the exact opposite, that we do want to hear what they're saying. We are interested to know whether they think this will meet their needs. But for us as a committee, we get to see that in a context that they mightn't appreciate. They come from a particular point of view, but we have decided that we want to share responsibility for training and adjustment with the labour market partners: the people who are actually in the field and who are going to benefit from this.

By doing that, we've got to take into account each of the partners' points of view. They don't always do that, partly because there's a history of ignoring what the experience is and what the feelings are of the other people we've identified as labour market partners. That has been ignored in the past, and we think that is one of the areas that can be improved. By setting up OTAB in this way, where it is a shared approach to it, we think we will overcome that liability.

1610

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, could you allow me another question, and then I'll just proceed on.

Could you tell me, again through the Chair, which of the—

The Chair: One moment. There's no need, as far as I'm concerned, to keep on prefacing questions with that silly "through the Chair."

Mrs Cunningham: You don't care? Well, some chairpersons are more uptight than you, Mr Chairman, so I'll just ignore you, if you don't mind. I don't really mean ignore you, but ignore that part of the process. I've been told in the past it was disrespectful, but if you don't think it is, that's fine.

The Chair: You'll not hear it from me.

Mrs Cunningham: Okay, directly to the parliamentary assistant.

Mr Gary Wilson: No, I'd rather go through the Chair, please.

Mrs Cunningham: Could you please tell me the names of these steering committees? How many steering committees were there, and what were the names of them?

Mr Gary Wilson: There were steering committees for each of the groups of labour market partners.

Mrs Cunningham: Could you just name them for me, please?

Mr Gary Wilson: There was business and labour, a steering committee for women, for francophones, for people with disabilities, for visible minorities. One was set up for the aboriginal community.

The Chair: Yes, Mr Sutherland.

Mr Sutherland: I was just going to say that it's my understanding that all the steering committees made presentations before this committee, so which ones exist is on the record.

Mrs Cunningham: It might be, but I can't remember how many there were. So far, I've got four: labour, francophones, visible minorities, aboriginals. Who else?

Mr Gary Wilson: Women, a steering committee for issues affecting women. And an education and training steering committee; that's one I missed on my original list.

Mrs Cunningham: Did you mention business?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think that was the second: labour and business I mentioned.

Mrs Cunningham: Was labour with business, or were they separate?

Mr Gary Wilson: No. They are separate steering committees.

Mrs Cunningham: So we had seven: labour, business, francophones, visible minorities, aboriginals, women and education and training. Is that correct? Seven steering committees?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, I think seven is—

Mrs Cunningham: As I have in my notes six that were party to these subcommittees that mentioned job creation, could you mention the groups that would not have thought that a knowledgeable, skilled and competitive labour force—could you tell me which of those groups would not agree with the fact that wealth and job creation were important enough to be recognized in clause 1(a.1)?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think the point here is the way these concepts are phrased, and we believe we have it in the legislation here that covers these concepts.

Mrs Cunningham: They didn't, because they came before the committee. Tell me which groups do not want the words "basis for wealth and job creation." It seems to me that that's what came to us as committee members. Tell me, so I can get it on the record, which groups the government feels wouldn't support that, because that's your premise, not mine.

The Chair: One moment, please, before you answer that. I am indifferent as to whether or not two or three or four people talk at the same time, but there is an interpreter who has a great deal of difficulty interpreting two, three and four people simultaneously.

Mr Malkowski: On a point of privilege: Interpreters have to work hard, so let's not use them as an excuse, but one at a time.

Mr Gary Wilson: My apologies to my colleague Mr Malkowski.

I think the important thing here is that the concepts are important to all the groups who appeared before us; that is, job creation and wealth creation, and then of course the skills that are involved in training. But it's how they get phrased that is the tough part, shall we say—

Mrs Cunningham: You're right.

Mr Gary Wilson: —that we can find words they all agree on. And this is the idea, that as long as you're going to include people in sharing the responsibility for training, then you have to come up with ways of describing what they're doing in terms that they find acceptable, that they all find acceptable. It isn't just a question of allowing each one to come up with their own favourite way of phrasing what they want to achieve, but with ones they can all agree on, and this is what the legislation does. We believe it includes these concepts in language that all the labour market partners can agree on.

Mrs Cunningham: I've certainly tried to support my colleague with some specifics, and I will continue to do that, because I think we've both attempted, using slightly different language, to get that concept into the legislation. Certainly the wording isn't ours; the wording comes from the public. I certainly have the groups down, and with the exception of one, seven of those groups have made that presentation, that at least the term "job creation" be part of the purpose. It isn't mentioned. It's extremely important that it be there.

I would ask that the government take that very seriously. If they don't like the wording that has been presented by my colleague and perhaps later by myself—job creation as a result of this legislation was extremely important to the majority of presenters. That was a suggestion that may not have been one that was taken seriously by the drafter, perhaps overlooked, but if we're having public hearings, that's the way it goes. They presented it, and I'd like you to respond to that one concern I have.

Certainly the creation of wealth is something that may not have been easily put down on paper, given the ideology of the government, but it was made very clear to us—

Mr Sutherland: Oh, please.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I have a right to my interpretation of the government's ideology.

The Chair: And you're expressing it.

Mr Gary Wilson: But not a right to be inflammatory.

Mrs Cunningham: Well, I don't think I was inflammatory. I have seen—

The Chair: Is that a point of order, Mr Wilson?

Mrs Cunningham: I have seen the member for Oxford when he has been offended, and that was not one of the demonstrations that I would be used to at all. I won't put it on record, but Mrs Witmer has seen it as well.

But I will say that that is an ideology that—you know, it used to be wearing of suits, but I now notice that that has changed. I can remember that when this government was first elected, it didn't like people who wore suits. Now they all wear suits.

I'm just saying that as to the term "creation of wealth," if there's a problem with the ideology, let's hear about it. If they don't have that problem, they now have their chance to make their voices heard. Let's hear from them.

The Chair: Thank you. Did you want to participate in the debate, Mr Sutherland?

Mr Sutherland: Yes, I do, Mr Chair. I would hope the member for London North would stick to the topic, rather than trying to regurgitate old-fashioned, outdated, in fact, never true stereotypes about the government's view about wealth creation. Every government wants to promote wealth creation. Our government does as well, because we know jobs rely on it, and it will allow us to continue forward with promoting more social justice. So can we stick to the topic at hand, which is the training and adjustment board, rather than these outdated stereotypes that somehow the member for London North wants to dream up in her own view of the world?

The Chair: Mr Ramsay?

Mr Ramsay: I'm very pleased that Mr Sutherland agrees with the need for the creation of wealth in society. He agrees with that, so I take it that he's going to support that.

I just want to make my one last pitch for this. I've tried not to make—and I haven't—a partisan argument or an ideological argument on this. I would move this amendment again on a point of clarity. As I said, I would be happy with all the values and thoughts and goals and aspirations that have been reflected in all the purpose clauses that are there. I'm just asking for them to be reorganized, sharpened up, clarified—but they can all be there—so that there's some very clear and clean direction for the new board. As I said, as they begin this, they begin as amateurs. We will bring them together, and we want them to be good professionals. I think we need to give them very clear instructions in order to do that.

1620

The Chair: Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, I want to dispute this term "amateurs" in referring to people who are working in the field. I tend to think that they are professionals in this regard, in terms of knowing what they need, and certainly

they are under a lot of pressure when you think of what's going on in the job market today.

But I do want to point out that this is in the legislation as it's written now, perhaps a bit too subtly, but it is in clause 1(b), for instance, where it talks about potential workers. They are people who are not working at this point but certainly want to be working, so that strongly implies that there has to be jobs created for them to become workers.

The second one is in clause (d) where it talks about "services are designed and delivered with a framework that is consistent with the economic and social policies...of the government of Ontario." Certainly, as my colleague from Oxford has pointed out, it is one of our strongest policies to expand wealth and to create jobs. So that is certainly consistent with that point of view. As I say, the concept of what you suggest in your amendment is there already.

The Chair: Thank you. I want to welcome Mr Harris to the committee. He, of course, as a member of the Legislature, has a right to attend at and participate in committee hearings, notwithstanding that he may not be a member of that committee. I, of course, as Chair, recognize his right not only to attend but his right to participate fully and to ask questions, as the right accorded by the standing orders doesn't require that you be a member of the committee and certainly shouldn't be prefaced by whether or not you happen to agree with your own caucus's views on the particular matter.

Mr Michael D. Harris (Nipissing): I thank you very much, Mr Chairman. I actually just came to chat about your riding—I missed you last week—but I am here to participate in the committee hearings as well.

The Chair: Thank you kindly, and we enjoyed having you down there in Welland-Thorold.

Mr Harris: I missed you. We were all asking for you.

The Chair: I saved your clippings. I've got it right here in my breast pocket. It won't take long to read.

Mr Harris: It won't take long to read? It was that brief, was it?

The Chair: Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chairman, I really have nothing more to say on this. As I said, I would offer to withdraw all those amendments I have put forward on the purpose clause if there was an undertaking by the government to recraft the purpose clause section to bring some clarity to the bill.

Mr Offer: Mr Chair, I've spoken about this in support of Mr Ramsay's motion. I just cannot believe that in this year of 1993, when we are speaking about a training regime to take us through this decade, that the government of the day would have such an aversion to including the phrase "job creation" in the purpose. It is absolutely at loggerheads with everyone else, not only in the province but throughout the country, that you, in what is going to be ballyhooed as the big training program, refuse to insert in the purposes the phrase "job creation." Isn't it strange that if you asked anybody outside of this place what a training program should be directed to and purposed for, they

would say job creation? The government of the day specifically has an aversion to that phrase.

It is the first amendment to this legislation. It is, if defeated, an amendment that will sit with this legislation for all time, because it doesn't include the single greatest issue on the minds of people in this province. Strange, very strange.

The Chair: All in favour of—

Mr Offer: Can we have a recorded vote?

The Chair: Of course. All in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please raise your hand. Keep your hand raised until your name is called.

Ayes

Cunningham, Offer, Ramsay, Witmer.

The Chair: All opposed, please raise your hand. Keep your hand raised until your name is called.

Nays

Huget, Malkowski, Sutherland, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands), Wood.

The Chair: Mr Ramsay's motion is defeated. There will be a five-minute recess.

The committee recessed at 1625 and resumed at 1639.

The Chair: Thank you, people. Mr Offer.

Mr Offer: I move that clause 1(b) of the bill be amended by striking out "and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" in the last two lines. I do that for Mr Ramsay.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Ramsay?

Mr Ramsay: Again, to continue with the first amendment I moved, I think it's important to try to bring some clarity to this bill. To ask the OTAB board to improve the lives of workers and potential workers in Ontario, while a very laudable goal, cannot be the direct purpose of this board. It hopefully would be an indirect purpose here: We hope that the outcome of working women and men in Ontario upgrading themselves will be that they are able to get higher-paying jobs, which is what we want for all Ontarians, and through that, will have not only enhanced income but also greater self-esteem, as we will be competing with those highly skilled workforces around the world.

Training is a how-to function; it's acquiring knowledge that one has to apply. Training in itself will not improve people's lives unless people apply it to work. So it's not going to be up to OTAB, and OTAB cannot directly improve the lives of workers and potential workers. It can contribute to that, and certainly that should be its goal. Obviously it can potentially open doors for workers who are more highly trained, but it will not improve their lives directly.

I'm sorry we didn't get the first amendment to clean that up. Really, what I'm trying to do now is a feeble attempt to try to clean all this up, because it is such a mess. What I really would prefer you to do, as I've said before, is to take it back and just reorganize it. All the goals, the mission that's there, all its objectives, are all fine, but put them in a succinct, coherent order that's clear for people

reading it, especially those who will be given the task of implementing the mandate of OTAB, because it's going to be so important.

I just think that with this particular phrase from this sentence, "to improve the lives of workers and potential workers," we're almost asking too much of the board and raising the expectations of working men and women throughout the province that OTAB somehow is going to be the salvation for the Ontario economy. It certainly can lead to the redevelopment of the economy by making sure that people have access to skills and that we develop good skills training programs and, through that, increase the job opportunities for all Ontarians in this province, but it's not going to work directly, nor can it work directly, towards the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers. We're just asking too much, and we're saddling this board with tremendous expectations that could contribute to its demise.

I don't think people in this room want that. I'd prefer another model, but if this is the model it's going to be, then I'll accept that. We'd like to see this work. With all the amendments I bring forward today, I want you to understand and take in good faith that I bring them forward wanting to see that this works, because we need this, we need this desperately, to get on with skills training in Ontario. So I'd ask the committee to consider this and hopefully to support this amendment.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Wilson?

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Ramsay, I'm pleased to hear your agreement or intent, I suppose, to get through this as quickly as possible because of the need for it. I would say that in terms of this particular amendment, you seem to have answered it in your first amendment by the strong argument you made for the inclusion of "wealth and job creation." What better way of meeting this need of improving workers' lives than by that kind of inclusion? And we've got it here already, as we have in the way the bill reads now. As I say, that was the response, that the inclusion of the labour market partners is not only that you would get the design of training programs that they think they need, but also you get the evaluation. How do we know that training is working? In that we not only have it in the workplace, but also in an improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers.

So the whole purpose of better training is to improve the economy, and one of those improvements comes from workers getting better jobs and those who aren't working now to find jobs in the economy. So I suggest to you that that purpose is very clearly put in the present reading of the purposes.

Mr Ramsay: Then why not put it in more directly? I guess that's what I'm arguing. I've only brought this amendment to counter and to back up my first amendment. Why not speak to it directly, that this should be part of a mission statement? Of course, in order to enhance the skills of workers in Ontario, we would hope to improve the lives of workers. How? Through the creation of "a skilled and competitive labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation." That's what we want.

I'm just saying, why don't we spell it out more exactly for the people who have to follow this? Because again, to use the analogy, this is basically the road map; that's what we've got. We've got a guide here, because this will be the law as to how this new Ontario Training and Adjustment Board will have to order itself. Why not spell it out, rather than all these—I keep saying "weasel words," and I don't want to, but this is just such wimpy language here. I just wish you would spell it out: (a), (b), (c) and (d), that this is what we want to accomplish. We want to get highly skilled, effective and efficient working people and we want to make sure that everybody has access to this. We want to make sure it reflects the two main official languages in this province.

It's all there, and as I said, I don't disagree with any of it, but just spell it out clearly so we can follow it; that not only the general public can follow it but the people who are going to be mandated to deliver and make accessible the services that we want to provide through OTAB can follow this and make sure they've got a clear goal in mind.

It's just so muddled. The thinking's all right, but it's just muddled. We should just clean it up and bring clarity to it. I want to clear the mud out of that solution of mud and water that's there. I want to bring some clarity to it and just lay it out in another format. By doing this, it gives me another opportunity to make this pitch to clean it up. But I won't deny any of the goals that you have there. They're all laudable. Just let's put some order to it.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I say, it's there very clearly in the language of the people who came together, the labour market partners. To them it's clear that "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" means that there will be improvement by removing the frustration of the kind of training we have now. By improving that training structure, their lives will be improved, say by having mobility with skills and even having the skills to do the jobs that are there now that they can't do. That's the kind of thing they have said, that this is what they would like to see from the training structure we're setting up.

Mr Ramsay: I'll just try for a second, and then my colleague can get in. You see, in your responses to me I'm getting language I like. We don't say here how skills training would improve the lives of workers, but right away that's a frustration: A lot of people feel trapped, because they don't have mobility, because they don't have the skills to go for a better job. So why not put that in there, "to enable workers to obtain the mobility that's gained through the attainment of skills." That would be great. I'd take what you said as an amendment.

All I'm saying is, let's spell out some of these goals, rather than just this loose thing that should have been up in a preamble. Of course we all want to improve the lives of workers in Ontario—that's what we all want to do—and through that, we'll have a better economy and everybody's going to benefit. That's what we all want to do; no argument there. You've just brought up another point that I didn't have here.

All I'm saying is just to exactly spell these things out so it's not left to interpretation. You and I might argue,

"What does 'the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers' mean?" We all agree that we believe in that and want that to happen, so let's just develop that and put it out there and lay it out. Just add one clause, "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers by," and then list the three or four things we want to accomplish to do that. That's all I'm saying: no argument with that; let's just lay it out.

Mr Gary Wilson: But the way it's written, by including things in at this point, you leave things out. By making the general statement, I think workers themselves well know what is an improvement in their lives. In any case, under the objects it is spelled out in paragraph 4(1)6: "To participate in the development and promotion of common standards in occupational training, so as to enhance labour force mobility by making skills more portable." So there it is. It is specified in this particular aspect of what we're trying to achieve through this arrangement, so that there will be the possibility of standards so that you could move with your skills.

1650

Mr Offer: I know we're coming to the end of the first day of clause-by-clause. I agree with my colleague. I think you will see, as you go through the purposes, that this has become a hodgepodge of words, that if anything is at all close to some positive description of something, that word has been inserted, no matter whether it has any relevance to the purpose.

The purpose of the act, I would have thought, would have been to improve the lives of workers and potential workers. I would have thought that would have been the purpose. I don't think it would have found its way within a particular subsection, but that's not the purpose of (b). I think Mr Ramsay has properly brought this out. If that were the purpose as stipulated in (b), we would have a different discussion. But it is one of the things. It says that workers should, first, be given access to publicly funded labour force development programs, then that these programs should make them competitive and enhance their skills, and then that it should improve the lives of workers.

What do you say to the workers who say: "What you're doing is making a worker able to do the job of four workers. You are enhancing that worker's skills. You are allowing that worker to meet the competitive demands of the 1990s, and that worker is performing a task which three or four other workers would have been needed to do in the late 1980s, early 1990s." Does that fly in the face of this purpose?

If a worker says, "Wait a minute. This training program is not in my best interests. You are doing something which I do not believe is going to enhance my life or the life of a future worker," what do you say to that person? What do you say to that person who makes that case? What are we talking about here? If it is for job creation, if it has as a purpose to help workers meet the challenges of the future, hey, that's fine. There isn't a person around who can't agree with that. Of course they should agree with that. That's what workers want.

But you throw in at least three ideas in one purpose. One clause has three ideas. Are they meant to be together? Is it meant to give an argument to a worker that unless all three aspects are met, the purpose is not dealt with? Must it be "publicly funded labour force development programs"? How do we factor in competitiveness in terms of enhancing skill levels, productivity, quality? Who decides that?

You look quizzical. Remember, Mr Parliamentary Assistant, when you stamp this through, you have cut the lines of accountability. Your government no longer has any say in this matter. You will make some namby-pamby argument as to accountability; we will discuss that later. You've cut the cord. What do you do to all those workers? They can't come to you any more. How do they deal with those things? These are valid questions, because the purpose sets the path that the legislation is to follow. All we want to know is, as you've thrown in every possible descriptive phrase known to humankind in four clauses, we would like to find out how you expect all of these things to work in a coordinated, concerted manner.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think the point is that these are the views of the labour market partners; that they've come together and decided that this is the way it can be described.

Mr Offer: Not the business sector.

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, in conjunction; in consultation and discussion with the labour market partners. The fact is that they agreed to look at the economy and see what they want to get out of it, for them.

The Chair: Mrs Cunningham, please.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, it's almost 5 o'clock. I'd just as soon call it quits for today. Perhaps we could do that with the—

Interjections.

Mrs Cunningham: How late are we going?

The Chair: We're going till at least 5 o'clock.

Mrs Cunningham: That's fine. I don't think this government or the members have taken into consideration any of the points we've been making so far. We all got these this afternoon at 2 o'clock or something; maybe that's the reason. But they'd better do their homework, because it won't take us long to go through the briefs and let them know which labour market partners came forward with these suggestions. I certainly, in a very global way, documented it before.

All I'm going to say on this one issue, because I think it might be worthy of your consideration later on this evening, is that I understand why my colleague has put forth this amendment. I think as it stands on its own, it doesn't make any sense; you either take it out or you put it in with some qualifier. My colleague has chosen to take it out, so you have that choice. Our amendment leaves it in with a qualifier.

The point that was made on behalf of the public, with regard to "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers," could be dealt with in either way, as far as we were concerned. We argued it, meaning my own staff and my colleagues who were following these hearings

closely. After some argument, we decided in our amendment, you will notice, to qualify it by using the words "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" which is in the act now, and then we qualified it by saying, "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals."

I hope the government will seriously consider it, because we too have attempted to amend the purpose clause 1(a) and (b) based on what we heard. I've got more to do with my time than think things up here. These are all words that were presented to us, and I hope you'll seriously consider it.

So that would be our (b.1), where we've added to that phrase. Then back to the beginning, it's obvious the government didn't like the amendment the Liberal caucus put forward with regard to a very strong presentation by all groups, again asking the question how or asking the question why. If you would look at our 1(a) this evening we would appreciate it very much, because I am coming back prepared to show you where these two points were made over and over again, if not in the briefs themselves, in the oral presentations. I don't think it takes away from the legislation; I think it adds to it.

At any other point, if we've made those amendments—again, I hope you will look at them this evening, because we spent a long time putting this together. My staff just brought more amendments based on the input, to help the government clarify. I've asked, because I have a feeling that perhaps you will take some time this evening, that we even do more.

They're very small housekeeping amendments, the last set. I'm very serious about this, because I think this whole process will be very suspect if we work for the next three or four days, based on what we heard, and we don't get any satisfaction from the government. If in fact you have decided that the labour market partners who sat on the steering committees were all you wanted to listen to, then I think we should add up the costs of these hearings and let the public know how much they did cost, including time for all of us and time away from our families. If that was your decision—and you've left me with the impression that it was—then I will be the first one to make certain that the public understands the cost of these hearings for the sake of one amendment.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): That's your job.

Mrs Cunningham: It's not just my job; it's your job too, to let the public know that. It's the job of members of the government as well. If these hearings have been worthwhile, not only with regard to cost but with regard to improving the legislation—as I said when we started out, I

don't think training and education are partisan matters, and by you not accepting changes, you are making it partisan. You should have put these changes forward yourselves. You chose not to, I thought, because in fact you were waiting to hear from us. Well, you're hearing from us, and we're not giving you anything new. We're giving you what the public told us, because I have confidence in the process.

Trust me. We've spent about 14 hours doing this work, arguing among ourselves—some of my young staff spent the weekend—and if all we get is one amendment out of this, there'll be a lot more disillusioned people than the people in this building, but they themselves vote as well, and they think that what they do for our caucus or the Liberal caucus or your government is worthwhile. A couple of them are sitting in this room, and if they were asked to put amendments forth because the opposition parties were going to take care of that and they had other things to do because of the work of the government of the day and the change in the ministers, that's fine. I understand it. I don't mind doing that work.

But we did not put this work together lightly. I have to tell you, probably only three or four are very difficult to deal with. As a matter of fact, we'd like your help on them. I would appreciate it if you would take some time to look at them, because I don't think our amendments are perfect, but I think they are improvements to this legislation.

So I'm planning to spend more time this evening looking at the Liberal amendments, and my staff are staying till 8 or 9 o'clock. I would expect that you would at least give us that courtesy.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. It's 5:02. This is the proposed revised schedule for the committee for the balance of the week. Tuesday, tomorrow, from 10 till 12 and then from 2 till 5:30; Wednesday, no session in the morning, but in the afternoon from 2 till 5:30; Thursday from 10 till 12:30 in the morning and from 2 till 5:30 in the afternoon. Unanimous consent?

Mr Offer: I have no problem. I'd just like to ask a question on this. At the end of the day on Thursday, no matter where we are with the legislation, do you then call the vote? It just ends, right?

The Chair: There's no time allocation on this bill in committee. Speaking to the revised schedule: unanimous consent to altering the schedule in that regard? Agreed. Thank you kindly.

We are adjourned until tomorrow morning at 10 am. Thank you.

The committee adjourned at 1703.

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***Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

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Jordan, Leo (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

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Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

*Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)

*In attendance / présents

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Cunningham, Dianne (London North/-Nord PC) for Mr Turnbull

Haeck, Christel (St Catharines-Brock ND) for Ms Murdock

Malkowski, Gary (York East/-Est ND) for Mr Klopp

Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway

Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Dadamo

Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Waters

Witmer, Elizabeth (Waterloo North/-Nord PC) for Mr Jordan

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:

Harris, Michael D. (Nipissing PC)

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Schuh, Cornelia, deputy chief legislative counsel

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Second Intercession, 35th Parliament

Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Tuesday 23 February 1993

Standing committee on resources development

**Ontario Training and
Adjustment Board Act, 1993**

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième intersession, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mardi 23 février 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

**Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre**

Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Tuesday 23 February 1993

The committee met at 1004 in committee room 1.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 10:04. We've been waiting since 10. Mr Wilson, Ms Haack and Mr Klopp are here. We shall wait until there's a quorum.

The committee recessed at 1004 and resumed at 1012.

The Chair: We're now ready to proceed. We're still debating Mr Offer's motion from yesterday, an amendment to clause 1(b) of the bill. Ms Cunningham, you had the floor. Do you have any further comments?

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): I think it's appropriate, then, that we put forward our amendment.

The Chair: No, we haven't voted on Mr Offer's.

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, we have not voted on the Liberal amendment? That's correct.

The Chair: I wanted to know if you had any more comments to make because you had the floor when we adjourned yesterday afternoon.

Mrs Cunningham: Just to bring the debate into focus with regard to the Liberal amendment, we understand, I think, what the Liberals were trying to do in their amendment. I haven't got it in front of me; I wish I did.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): The yellow sheet, the second page.

Mrs Cunningham: Second page? The intent of my colleagues is to have the words "and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" struck from the bill because they felt—I feel, anyway—that it should not stand alone, that it ought to be explained. We have an amendment that we will place after this one, since the government has already said that it is not in favour of it, where in fact we do support the inclusion of these words but also explain it and tell the why and the how. On that note, I did put some remarks on the record yesterday and I'll leave it at that.

The Chair: Mr Ramsay, did you want to sum up?

Mr Ramsay: Really, I said it all yesterday. I'm going to have some opportunity to speak to the PC motion that covers the whole purpose area, so I'll reserve my further comments.

The Chair: All those in favour of Mr Offer's motion, please indicate. All those opposed to Mr Offer's motion? The motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham: In support of the statements that Mr Offer made in placing this motion, we'll come at trying to accomplish the same thing but from a different point of view—

The Chair: Do you have a motion to make.

Mrs Cunningham: —not only with regard to the Liberal motion 2 with regard to clause 1(b), but also with regard to the Liberal motion 1 with regard to clause 1(a.1). They've attempted, believe it or not, on their own to solve this problem. I'm saying that because we didn't collaborate. We did come up with the problems as we saw them presented to us by members of the public. Sometimes on committees I've sat on the opposition parties, including ourselves and the New Democratic Party before the last election, would not get together but would certainly say: "These are the 10 problems we saw. Have we missed anything? If we have missed anything, do you want to try to take care of this one and we'll take care of this one?" Sometimes we even said it with the government members. But I think the public of Ontario is fed up with the way things have worked in the past. So here, at least, I'm happy to see that we, independently, without even making any kind of list, have decided that this is what the public was concerned about and that therefore we should bring forward amendments.

Before I get on to this one, because we're at the very beginning of a very important piece of legislation, I'd like to remind the government that we are expecting that this process will work. In talking to my colleagues last evening and to seven or eight of the presenters, they were very discouraged to know that the government, at least from my understanding—and certainly you have an opportunity to correct me if I'm incorrect—feels that the input that it did have from its steering committees was sufficient. That led, I think, presenters who represented very large groups, whom I took the trouble to contact last evening and this morning, to the idea that in fact—and I hate to use this word—the government's hands are tied.

You can look at it any way you like, but I have talked to members for the steering groups and have phone calls in to members from the other steering groups. These are not people I know personally, but they are people who did come before the committee from those steering groups. I don't think any of the steering groups left thinking that everything they had agreed to or the recommendations they had left with the government were carved in stone. If in fact it was, why have the public hearings?

I'm sure you've had an opportunity to take a look at some of our amendments from both critics. I'm sure also that you understand that if we don't get through this process

with some compromise, I think that's going to set the wrong tone for compromise throughout the province of Ontario, because this is where it starts, right in this Legislative Assembly. I did not let my name stand and come down here to be ignored with regard to my responsibilities in representing the public, whether it be in London or as a member of a standing committee of this Legislative Assembly.

If we end up with no amendments, you better be sure that we'll be making a very big noise about it and will be informing the public as to the process that we've just been involved in and the expense. Given that we're not alone in our concerns, I will move and, along with my colleagues, see if this one will be of assistance, since the intent is the same.

With regard to clauses 1(a) and (b) of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, I would move that clauses 1(a) and (b) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(a) to recognize the need for a competitive Ontario labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation;

"(b) to enable business and labour, together with educators, trainers and representatives of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, to play a significant role in the design and delivery of appropriate labour force development programs and services;

(b.1) "to give Ontario's employers, workers and potential workers access to publicly funded labour force development programs and services that will, in the context of the competitive Canadian and global economies and in the context of a fair and just society, lead to the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals."

Just to begin the explanation and the need for this, I'd like to begin by talking about the new realities of training and education in the province of Ontario as these new realities are being discussed throughout the communities of Ontario. As all of us know, probably one of the greatest concerns in Ontario today is the challenge of training our workforce, given the new realities. If we in fact are serious about training, we have to know that this is going to be one of the biggest challenges we have in the next few years—well, we certainly know a decade, but it's my opinion that we've lost a decade because we haven't moved where we ought to have moved. Even where we knew we wanted to go, in this province, for some reason, there are tremendous roadblocks to dealing with the realities and the necessities.

If we're looking at technological realities and the economic realities and ecological realities and the political realities and the social realities—and I name them carefully because I've been involved more recently in looking at the whole issue of who the partners ought to be within the city of London and region, southwest region—and where the empowerment ought to be, I've said before in this committee that I really do hope OTAB will work. The parliamentary assistant and I had quite an interesting conversation after the meeting yesterday with regard to both of our concerns. We hope the credibility will be there and the confidence in the OTAB itself and in the community boards.

But there's no doubt that these realities work in combination with the whole goal of job creation, and that is synonymous with wealth creation for the quality of life. With all the experts who are out there across Canada—and I'm now speaking because I attended a major conference that was held in London on the weekend—it was interesting to see that the focus for all these new realities was wealth creation for quality of life. Those were the words that were used by everybody who talked about having a job being the most important issue for them, because without a job they weren't empowered to do the kind of things they wanted for themselves and for their families.

I wanted to speak just a little bit about the London Investment in Education Council, which was formed in 1990. I think more of these councils will be formed across the province of Ontario because quite frankly so many businesses, labour, unions, young people, parents, school boards and municipal governments don't think the political process will allow training to get done. Even where we have political bodies in place, such as municipal councils, school boards and the province, for some reason it just isn't happening.

This London Investment in Education Council was formed with a single vision and purpose, and that was to help students develop the skills and values they'll need to succeed in the workplace and in our London community. To that end they're fostering new partnerships and alliances within the London community, bringing employers and educators closer together. They're also redefining the role of learning and taking concrete steps towards this newly shared vision.

I'd like to read into the record something that was stated. I think this is definitely the philosophy behind where the education community is going and where the London Investment in Education Council is going. I read it this weekend four or five times at major addresses I gave.

"The workplace is an ever-changing world, a moving target, and each year it demands change and its needs grow. Helping students prepare for a productive role in this changing environment is a tremendous responsibility, and yet, up to now, we've expected our education system to handle the task singlehandedly. We've expected teachers and professors, school boards, education administrators and provincial ministries to shoulder the burden alone. Not any more."

I actually think that is the mission of OTAB itself. I think we recognize in Ontario that we've depended far too heavily on our educational institutions and that we do need the help of the business community and labour to help us be more successful. We also recognize that we're very far behind other parts of the world in training our young people and in retraining our workforce.

I am saying that because these people have worked since 1990 in many communities in Ontario and across Canada, specifically in Alberta. They've had a great deal of success. In fact, Alberta decided not to go through the public hearing process with regard to its training and adjustment board and not to work, at this point in time, with the federal government. We're the only province that is. We're sort of the flagship, so I think what we do and how

we do it is extremely important to the success not only of our own programs in Ontario, but to the federal programs across Canada, because if we're not successful in having the confidence at the end that everybody was heard and listened to, then I don't think the federal government will embark upon this process in another province.

The province of Alberta was well represented at the conference I attended on the weekend. I went on Friday morning and afternoon and most of Saturday. So far, they don't have a lot of confidence. I wasn't sure what to expect, but I was certainly a very great supporter of the process, although I have stated my disappointment in the public hearings in some of the communities. I don't think it's news that I was very disappointed. I thought they could have been handled in a better way. I also feel that the government still has a chance to, in my view, gain in its credibility.

We also talked not only about the new realities, with the focus being wealth creation for the quality of life, but the new economy. I don't know whether my colleagues on this committee are particularly interested in hearing about what the four engines that will drive our province will be in the next 10 years, but I can tell you that not a pin dropped when I spoke to four student groups across the province, because actually it's our job to make the quality of their life. Whether you like wealth creation or not, I think we owe it to them to give them at least the opportunity all of us had. The young people were very interested.

The major industries that are driving the North American economy are in four sectors. I didn't even know, when I saw the headings, what they meant. The one that really got me was "instrumentation," which means process. I thought of musical instruments or maybe a dental drill or something like that. These are the areas that we have to train our young people for. I have to tell you, I don't know a lot about them myself and I feel I'm on the leading edge of being informed. Process control instruments, industrial controls, optical instruments and lenses, engineering and scientific instruments, instruments to measure electricity, measuring and control devices, environmental monitoring equipment—a lot of it does have to do with our aging society and a lot of it has to do with the projection that a lot of our population won't be working in the same sense that we say "work."

The second second engine is computers and semiconductors, meaning computer equipment, semiconductors, electronic components, software and information services.

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The third one, one I think we've well established in Ontario with a great hope for the future as long as we don't lose our experts whom we've trained and spent a lot of money training, is health and medical: medical care, surgical and medical instruments, surgical appliances and supplies, X-ray and electronic apparatus, biological products, medicines and drugs. I think if we're very careful in the way we deal with this, this engine that will drive the North American economy, we can keep it here in Canada and still employ our young people rather than having them go elsewhere to work in these different fields.

The last one won't be a surprise to anybody in this committee; I think we've known it for the last decade: communications and telecommunications. You know how fast that's moving. How would you like to be a teacher trying to train young people, or even a professor at the universities? It changes by the week. Telecommunication services, telephone equipment, radio—

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): That's why communication is very important.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes. Radio and microwave communications, entertainment, aircraft equipment, which is going to happen in London—we've got jobs there now—guided missiles and space equipment. We hope this will also happen in London. We're looking at the site of the former base for a space university—not a university; I shouldn't say that because that's being looked at somewhere else—certainly space technology and a camp for young people. There are a lot of investors looking at the city because they see a lot of spinoffs if that can happen. I don't know enough about where that's at to inform the committee.

I've talked about the major industries that drive the North American economy and I thought you'd like to know about Ontario's new economy. More people work in Ontario's computer services industry than in the province's mining and forestry industries combined. More people work in the communications industry than in the entire auto and auto parts industry. The foodservice industry employs more people than the construction industry.

In Canada, Canada's electronics industry is larger than our pulp and paper industry and Canada's communications and telecommunications industry is larger than our mining and petroleum industries combined.

Just to close my speech, because that's probably what you think it is—but I'm very serious about this—for most of our history we were told that Canadians have prospered by relying on the resources beneath our feet. We're now talking about our pulp and paper, our mining, all of the other resources that we learned about in school, that we watched our parents and our family members and others across this province in areas that most of us have never travelled to rely on those resources beneath our feet for our economy. But in this information age we were warned that we will need to rely on the resources between our ears, so it will be the education and training that we give to our young people for what everybody agrees is the real purpose of all of this, the new realities, wealth creation for quality of life, meaning people working.

Having said that, we'll give this another go. Mr Chairman, if it's appropriate, I'd like to talk just clause 1(a) for the moment and just stay with the debate around 1(a) and perhaps hear from the government again. It was attempted yesterday, and perhaps some of us have had an evening to sit and think about it. I'm going to put on the record again how I feel.

The business steering committee, which I have had some discussions with, was formed 13 months ago, again, in order to input into the consultation process and to coordinate the activities of the business community. I'm going

to tell you quite frankly that in talking to different members of that steering committee they didn't always agree—you're quite right—but they did look at this whole issue and come to some conclusion some time in the early fall. Since then many of them have gone back to their chambers of commerce, many of them have communicated with their boards of trade, many of them have had further discussions with the Retail Council of Canada. We know that the Canadian Manufacturers' Association was represented here at the hearings. All of these groups, in some way or another, have had better ideas, have had opportunities to think, and none of them felt that the positions they took as advisers to the government in a steering committee would be the end result. This particular steering committee said that it had never received any promises, that in fact the information it gave, resulting in the legislation that was tabled, would be the end result. They themselves relied on this public hearing process that has been so much of our history.

I was somewhat taken aback yesterday to see the government hanging heavily on this particular point. At least from what I've been able to do in the last few hours, that was not the understanding. Otherwise no deal had been struck, at least with the business steering committee members. To use them as a reason for no change is not appropriate, in my view. They would be happy to come back and make these points for themselves.

They argued—all of these groups—before the committee that Bill 96 fails to recognize that wealth creation is needed to achieve the bill's objectives and tries to be all things to all people. I will table some of the remarks I made with regard to the new realities. These overheads were put together for a conference. The presenters were from the business community at the school of business in Banff. They had no idea what words we were going to be using in our legislation at all, but I think that "wealth creation for the quality of life" was their cornerstone, and if we can't get that into our legislation, if that is the new reality and the cornerstone of it, if we don't put it into our legislation, we're doing a big disservice to everybody. That's our effort.

The new clause, 1(a), that we've tabled, along with the same intent that my colleagues from the Liberal Party tabled, recognizes that in order to prosper in the future Ontario will need a competitive Ontario workforce that will form the basis for wealth and job creation. If we are afraid to put those words in our own legislation, we've got a major problem.

For me, that is simply the end of the debate. I'd be interested in hearing from government members or my colleagues to see if we've presented it well and I'd certainly like to hear the arguments against it, other than from the business steering committee.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Thank you, Ms Cunningham, for such an inclusive summary of the reasons for supporting this amendment. You raised a number of issues, some of which I'd like to speak to and which I'm sure my colleagues would like to address as well, and of course members of the Liberal Party.

Perhaps as a general way of looking at this, you raised the difficulty of approaching this from an individual basis. You said that with our limited experience we don't always recognize the changes that are occurring in our economy, what you called "the new Ontario economy." When you talk about the individual circumstances, of course I think we all think of our particular situations; in mine I have two daughters who will be inheriting this new Ontario economy, as you call it, so of course I'm very concerned on a very personal level about what the future holds for them.

But you also referred to the older economy too, where we depended on what was under our feet. That reminded me of the economy my parents grew up in, a farm and then the mining community of Timmins. The resources there supported a certain type of existence for our family at first, and then my father became a letter carrier, which I guess interpreted the world for us from a different perspective.

You probably are aware of the concept of "canary" as a term to suggest some kind of sensing device, a type of instrumentation actually of a very primitive nature but very effective, that was used in the coal mines of England. The idea of the canary was that if—

Mrs Cunningham: My father was a coal miner in Wales, so I do know what you're talking about.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay, so we have some comparison there. My father-in-law was a coal miner in Ukraine, so there are these similarities.

Mrs Cunningham: All in our experiences.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. We have to interpret the world through these experiences.

Interjection.

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Ms Christel Haeck (St Catharines-Brock): —the technical staff here some time ago about apprenticeships and the fact that I think all of us bring a variety of experiences. But let's put it on the record: Both of my parents went through apprenticeships, both of them have journeymen papers, but they didn't acquire them in this country. They acquired them in Germany, and my father in fact managed to keep his family very well, never suffering a day of unemployment as a result of his trades paper.

If we really want to criticize government, I have a very strong concern about 40 years of Tory government that in fact did not provide adequate apprenticeship training for people to do the kind of jobs that are still out there.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, your father?

Mr Sutherland: No, I think I will pass at this stage and defer back to Mr Wilson's comments.

Mrs Cunningham: I think it's sad that we bring the partisan stuff in.

The Chair: Mr Klopp, your father?

Mrs Cunningham: I must say, it hasn't occurred to this date, I don't think, in that great way, but that's too bad. If that's what it's all about, do it yourselves.

Mr Sutherland: I think Mr Wilson was the one commenting here, Mr Chair.

Mr Gary Wilson: I was just getting on to canaries. I thought that they did touch part of your experience and that workers are canaries in our system and that when they're out of a job they know the economy is changing. We don't have to tell them that it's no longer the resources under our feet, but the resources between our ears that are the important aspect to our economy, one of the more important aspects now.

I want to reiterate that this is why we are including them around the table in designing training programs that will keep them in the jobs they have as well as prepare them for jobs that are going to come in the future. That speaks very directly to the idea of the wealth creation and why we think it is included in the legislation as it is written now.

As our discussion showed yesterday, the idea of improving the lives of workers and potential workers suggests that can come only from an expanding economy that depends on wealth creation. By making sure that those programs are there, we'll meet, in a timely fashion, the needs of all the people who depend on training and adjustment programs. We have listed them in the legislation, the employers and workers and potential workers whom we're bringing around the table to share in this responsibility. Again, we feel that by including everyone there we're going to end up with the best kind of programs, because they'll be based on complete information.

Again, with respect to that canary aspect, the people who need the training most immediately are those who are finding that the skills they have don't meet the kinds of job they're in or the job they will need.

Mrs Cunningham: What's this got to do with the amendment?

Mr Gary Wilson: It has to do with the suggestion that the way the legislation is written is to reflect the views of people who are in that position. You mentioned the business steering committee and the views it brought to the discussions, the consultation, again with the understanding that they would have to be balanced with the views of the other labour market partners. This is the kind of legislation that we wrote after that consultation that took into account the views not only of the business steering committee but the steering committees of the other labour market partners.

Mrs Cunningham: What was your intent around the public hearing, then? What was your intent with regard to people who came before the public hearings? I didn't hear the views of these committees—I wasn't part of that process—so what was your intent around the public hearings? I really need to know that. Are you planning on changing anything as a result of the public hearings or did the steering committees give you the best views it could and then you put it together and it stays that way? Is that what's going to happen?

Mr Gary Wilson: Mrs Cunningham, you've brought forward an amendment here which we are discussing. You've said already how much time you've spent in developing these amendments, and now we're looking at them to see whether they should change or how they would affect the legislation as we've written it. You said you

weren't present at the consultation or the discussion that ensued from the various steering committees.

Mrs Cunningham: No, I wasn't there.

Mr Gary Wilson: The record, though, of those consultations is the legislation. They've come now before the—

Mrs Cunningham: That's fine. My question is simply this: Does this mean then that you have taken together the best advice you could get from the steering committees, put it in the form of legislation and is that the way it's going to stay or are we now going to take a look at the general public, which wasn't part of the steering committees, and see if we in fact can improve upon it? Is that the intent of this or isn't it?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's it exactly.

Mrs Cunningham: So there is some hope of making some amendments based on what the general public said before the committee? Is that a fact?

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, the—

Mrs Cunningham: Yes or no, is there any hope of making any amendments? You've looked at them now.

The Chair: One moment please, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I don't plan on spending the week here doing this if we're not going to get any response from the government. You and I both know that would be a total waste of my time. I've already put up with one partisan comment, after all of the work we've done, and I'm not staying here putting up with it any more, I'm telling you right now. If we're not going to make any amendments, I'm leaving.

The Chair: Ms Cunningham, all of that having been said, please, I enjoy the committee members having the opportunity to ask questions of the parliamentary assistant or indeed of each other.

Mrs Cunningham: I asked a question; I can't get an answer.

The Chair: One moment, though. All I ask is that if you ask a question, you live with whatever the response is. You're then entitled to criticize that response and identify it as not being an answer, but all I'm asking is, for the sake of the Hansard people, who've got to try to transcribe this—which may be to your benefit, Mr Wilson's benefit or nobody's benefit—that you asked a question. Let Mr Wilson respond. You can have the floor back. There's no restriction on the amount of time. We've got till five o'clock today. That's all I ask, please, in the interests of making a proper record. Go ahead, Mr Wilson.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes or no.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, Mrs Cunningham, we're going to look at each of the amendments as they come forward, discuss the merits of them and then decide on whether they should change the legislation as we have it. As I say, we've written this legislation in consultation with the labour market training partners and we've come up with language that suits them all—

Mrs Cunningham: No.

Mr Gary Wilson: —in the sense that they realize that it doesn't necessarily meet everything they would like to

see there, but, in conjunction with what the others have said, they can work with this language.

Mrs Cunningham: Could I respond to this statement of "suits them all"? Why did we have the public hearings if you really felt that?

Mr Gary Wilson: Just to show that it does. I mean, to see what is in the aspect of the legislation.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, may I—

The Chair: Mr Sutherland.

Mr Sutherland: Thank you. I think we need to get refocused here. We've got a specific amendment. I think you as the Chair have been very lenient in letting the discussion flow around that amendment and maybe be very free. Get on to some other topic. If we want to get into badgering sessions back and forth about what's going to happen or what's not, we can do that. I don't find that very productive. If we want to discuss the specific amendments, so that we can get through the amendments and see which ones may pass and which ones may not, then let's have a discussion about the specific amendments. Let's do that. We'll go through them one at a time, as is the normal procedure.

I would just hope that we could refocus ourselves to dealing specifically with what is in the amendment, rather than some of the other issues that seem to be coming up in this discussion. I believe we're dealing with Mrs Cunningham's amendments on clauses (1) (a) and (b) and would hope that the discussion would focus on that.

Mrs Cunningham: Clause (1)(a).

Mr Sutherland: Then we can have a vote on that in the near future.

The Chair: All right. That may well be your hope. Whether or not they're met remains to be seen. But let's look at it from this perspective.

Interjections.

The Chair: Mrs Cunningham, please. Let's look at it from this perspective: The government has only two amendments. The two opposition caucuses have a large number of amendments. Most of them are very substantial in terms of what they do to the legislation. That's my view; that may not be the committee members' view. It would seem to me that the government members can sit here and thrust and parry as long as they want because they really have only two amendments to the legislation. It would also seem to me that opposition members have far more interest in making sure that as many as possible, hopefully all, of their amendments are put on the table, debated and discussed. At the same time, I have no intention of imposing artificial or unreasonable restraints on the scope of the debate. That's just the kind of guy I am. I quite frankly enjoy this free-ranging debate. Go ahead, Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Only to say that relying on the resources between our ears is going to be a real challenge for some individuals in the province of Ontario, but I don't expect that to be an issue in this committee right now. Also, I want to be clear that we're speaking to (1)(a), not (a) and (b), because they're very different. One supports the other.

The Chair: Quite right.

Mr Ramsay: I share Mrs Cunningham's frustration. I'd like to address this to Mr Wilson because quite frankly I think you're being a little dense, Mr Wilson, and I'd like you to listen to this. I wish you had listened to what I said yesterday too. There is not one thought or statement that I do not disagree with in your purposes.

Ms Haeck: Mr Chair, as a point of order: I understand that this place tends to be partisan 98% of the time—

Mrs Cunningham: It wasn't until you said what you did.

Ms Haeck: —but I think the personal insults are inappropriate.

The Chair: I regarded that as something that could potentially be ambiguous. I didn't perceive Mr Ramsay as intending it anything other than the most accurate sense of the word.

Mr Ramsay: I'm saying that you're being dense because you weren't listening. Your arguments to me yesterday and to Mrs Cunningham about this are that you have to have balance in the purpose clauses. I agree. You have to facilitate the needs, the thoughts, the desires of the various groups. I agree. What I've said to you is that you need to re-sort them out. All the thoughts are there; they're just in a jumble.

What I'm concerned about is that when you bring all these people together there's not a clear direction to this new board as to what the number one priority is. As you said, the number one priority seems to be buried in (b). It's been buried. All I'm saying is, re-sort it out to bring some clarification. Put it in a logical order as to what the mandate of OTAB is. I'm not disputing that you have to have a balance between the goals of all the various groups. The business people came in here and the labour people came in here and they were not arguing with the thoughts in here.

I'll bring to your attention that Anne did all this work for us in the summary of recommendations. The committee will note now that we have the final package before us. There are about six pages that deal with this that are the summaries of the submissions we've had just dealing with the purpose clause. The reason, I guess, we're spending so much time on this is that it's so important. I've talked to Mrs Cunningham. We're certainly going to have to get into some time management here because there are, as the Chairman has said, other substantive clauses here. Again, I'm not arguing with ideology or the desires of the various groups. I'm just saying to sort it out: the same thoughts, even some of the same wording, but just get it clearer. That's what I'm asking for.

When we look through, on these pages, all the various groups, "The bill should have a clearly stated market focus," says another group. "We are dismayed at the disappearance of a mandate statement and concerned that there are many references to social objectives but no references to economic objectives." Again, we're looking for balance. You can still have the social objectives but again, I'm wondering if you can have something about the improvement of workers' lives. Anyway, leave it in; just sort it out.

"Add a strong statement," another group says, "of OTAB's vision to the purpose clause"—for example, "Ontario, with the most effective, highly skilled and knowledgeable workers in the world"—something like this that really puts it down. Another group says, "A market-driven, client-learner centred approach to training, an equitable partnership led by business and labour affirmed in structure and process, a system which encourages, measures and rewards innovation, efficiency and effectiveness."

I guess what we're looking at is sort of more action words, rather than the sort of mealy-mouthed words we've got here, like replacing words like "give access" with action-oriented phrases like "drive change," because that's what we need. This is really not the social policy committee here. We're not really looking at social policy; we're looking at what really should be a hard-hitting piece of economic legislation to try to get the engine of the Ontario economy driven again. That's what it's going to take.

It's taking leadership from a government. You're starting to do it. That's what we're saying: Drive those groups together, force them groups together, because they haven't. Force business to work with labour, because they haven't been good partners in the past. We want to force them to do that. I'm saying we need some tough action words to get this thing going so it'll be a success. I want it to work. I'd really like it to work and I think it needs to be stronger language. That's all I'm saying.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): On this matter, much of this was discussed yesterday. Certainly I made the points I wish to make on this matter yesterday. I'm not going to restate them, but I would like to remind the members of the government that the then minister said: "People care about this issue. It really touches their sense of where they're at in terms of their needs at this point in time, in terms of their sense of where the economy's at, in terms of the need for very positive measures to address the crisis we all feel in our families and in our lives, as well as in our political parties and at the level of government."

The minister continued by saying, on the first day of hearings: "I understand that some 140 people have registered with an intent to speak to you as the committee and I must say I look forward to hearing their comments and suggestions. That certainly will help us all ensure that Bill 96 is built as a solid foundation for OTAB, because OTAB will be around for many, many years to come". The minister made this statement the first day of hearings.

This amendment, as well as the previous amendment put forward by my colleague Mr Ramsay yesterday, really embraces the suggestions which we heard in the public hearings. Are you going to abide by what was hoped to be the experience of this committee by the minister?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think it's fair to say, though, that one of the strongest things we've heard in the hearings was the interdependency between the social and economic goals of the province and that you can't have one without the other. I think it's also fair to say that what we've done here in the legislation is to combine those two elements in a balanced way that represents all the views we've identified as labour market partners. In spite of what Mr Ramsay

says, it's clearly set out in the four parts to the purpose section. I think, as Mr Offer said too, that we've been through this yesterday. We've covered the important parts of the goals of OTAB in the purpose clause. I'm willing to let it stand there.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Offer, did you have anything further on that point?

Mr Offer: Just briefly, the business steering committee of OTAB vociferously disagrees with exactly what you said. I think that they would agree with the opening statements of the minister, who sent out a message that these public hearings were meant to hear suggestions and comments and that the government would listen and incorporate those issues. This amendment does that. Mr Ramsay's amendment yesterday did that. I believe that if this amendment fails, as Mr Ramsay's failed yesterday, then indeed there has been a very short shrift to the words spoken by the minister on the first day of these hearings.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I think the comments by the government on this, where it talked about meeting the social and economic realities, are not good enough. We're not talking about just the social and economic realities. Right across Canada right now, major discussions are taking place and no one is talking about just the social and economic realities. I think we should be learning from what others have done.

I notice the member for Oxford throwing his pencil down and getting all upset. If he were at the University of Western Ontario right now, he wouldn't be behaving like this. I hope he will in fact attend, in London and southwest Ontario, the third round table of this group and, in April, a major discussion for southwest Ontario. They have decided in that area of Ontario, and in other parts of Canada, that the social and economic realities or challenges are not good enough standing alone. They have to stand along with the technological realities. They have to do it with the ecological ones. The young people are talking about that, about the political realities, and that's what's going on in this room: How can you make things happen?

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These are all of the realities, not just social and economic. They can no longer stand alone. We have to take into consideration the political realities—that's what we're doing here today—and of course the technological realities. Those are the new realities, not just social and not just economic. That's what we've looked at in the past—maybe not enough social, but certainly economic. The others are all part of the big dynamics for the creation of wealth and the quality of life. Those are the words being used. They're not my words; they're used by experts who have been having these round tables right across North America. But the ones I'm interested in are the Canadian ones. The federal government is looking into this along with the different provinces.

You started, Mr Chairman, by making a point. I thought, "I certainly agree with you." We all come with our individual knowledge. Most of us take the time to find out more, and in our job I think we're particularly privileged because doors are opened for us. We can go into places of business, places of learning and see things that

maybe the general public isn't able to see or doesn't know about, but sometimes we see things that aren't available for others to see because they have a lot to do with the competitiveness. Not one individual around this table has the same experiences, but we all bring different strengths.

Some of us have been privileged because of whatever we're interested in life or because of our work. I think that's why you're seeing this sense of commitment over here to make it our business to do the best we can to find out what's the best for Ontario. That's why we're putting forth these amendments. To close our minds and say just the social goals or the economic goals, without recognizing the importance of the technological goals, the ecological goals and the political goals, is not good enough.

Those goals cannot be achieved if we don't recognize that the bottom line within these new realities and the success of technological training in education is wealth creation for the quality of life. That's everybody. We're just asking that that be put in here. I'm responding now because you said "social" and "economic," and I had mentioned all five before. I would appreciate it if you give consideration to what everybody else outside of this particular committee has recognized. I'm talking about hours and hours of time and hundreds of thousands of dollars. These conferences cost the private sector and the public sector, because all provinces and the federal government are putting money forward for these conferences, millions of dollars. They've been going since 1990 and they are finally culminating in these kinds of ideas. They're my ideas and I think this committee has to recognize it for whatever it's worth. We're learning something here today; I'm just sharing with you what I know. I would appreciate somebody sharing what he knows, but putting up walls is exactly what we've done in this province, and I don't think this legislation can put up more.

The reasons we're being so insistent on this particular motion and on this particular amendment is because it is the ground for all of the legislation. If you all went home last night and didn't bother getting to the new minister to tell him about this, and if you actually have put these blinkers up at a time when your government is in fact changing your leadership, we shouldn't be meeting; we should be adjourning. I'm not suggesting that we do that, but we should not be meeting. If these are the instructions or the marching orders that you got, then we shouldn't be dealing with them, because it's not fair to Ontario. I asked you last night to take a look at it, but if you don't go for this amendment, which is the cornerstone of this legislation, you are sending a very loud message out. If you're not sure what to do, for heaven's sake tell us and take it back.

I will be asking the minister, because I am meeting with him on Thursday—albeit by phone, because he's busy, but we do have a call set up—if indeed he has had a look at this before today. If he hasn't, that's irresponsible, because this is the most important legislation you're going to look at in your tenure, in my view. I will share the views of one of my colleagues when she said we hadn't dealt with it in Ontario. She's absolutely right. I was on a school board in those days trying to do what I could do anyway, but we've got a chance now. Let's fix it. Walls are not fixing it.

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I'd like to speak to the amendment that has been introduced by my colleague Mrs Cunningham, and that is to include in the purpose clause "to recognize the need for a competitive Ontario labour force that would form the basis for wealth and job creation."

We have, with this particular document, an opportunity to allow this OTAB to be an effective agent for change rather than just another agency. However, I think we need to recognize that the purpose clause that presently exists lacks any vision, lacks any real purpose. It deals primarily with how to. There's no effective leadership provided. What you're saying here is a very weak statement. As I say, it lacks a vision. If there's no vision here, if there's no precise statement of what we want to do, and that is to recognize the need for a competitive Ontario labour force that is going to form the basis for wealth and job creation, what we're going to do is lose that opportunity, because we need to focus on the skills the people in this province need to create wealth. Only then can we, as Mrs Cunningham has already said, improve the quality of our life.

When we talk about improving the quality of our life, we talk about strengthening the quality of our social and physical environment. Unfortunately, we seem reluctant, in the purpose clause, to talk about wealth and job creation and a competitive labour force. Why? I don't know. We need to realize that the quality of our future life, and I'll say it again, is going to depend on our ability to generate and sustain wealth in a competitive, changing environment. We have seen the consequences of not doing so in the last few years. Many people have talked about the lack of training in this province and what has happened here. We've lost the initial purpose for OTAB.

I think we have before us here a way as to how not to solve the problems. I want to tell you that last night I met with a group of ordinary people in small-town Ontario. After I'd finished speaking, they said to me, "Elizabeth, how many amendments did the government introduce?" I said, "Ten." I said, "Two." They wish I'd said 10. They said, "What were they?" I described them. I said, "Unfortunately, I feel as though I'm going through the same process as I went through with Bill 40, that people in this province have given tremendous input, excellent suggestions, and the government has gone through this charade of listening. They've paraded us around the province. However, in the end they're not willing to make any accommodation other than to appease their own special interest groups."

One person got up and said, "No, Elizabeth, don't feel it's futile, because when this government was elected, it told us that it would be different, that it would consult, that there would be consensus and that there would be compromise." This gentleman said to me: "Elizabeth, we have learned that is not the case, so don't feel it's futile. We now know what this government is really about." I thought that was quite enlightening, because by my telling this individual that, again, we only had one amendment of any substance after three weeks of public hearings and my saying it was futile, he was saying to me no, because the public has learned a very valuable lesson, and that is that this government really doesn't want to listen.

A few of these people had been part of presentations that were made regarding OTAB. They put in a lot of time and effort and they're quite disappointed that the government didn't listen. But I think what they're the most disappointed about is the fact that you've introduced within the legislation some very subtle changes that the business steering committee is very concerned about, as is the entire business community in this province. You have forgotten the economic objectives. You talk over and over again about the social objectives, but there is no reference whatsoever to economic objectives.

Let's face it, if we don't have a competitive workforce, we're not going to have wealth and job creation. That is the reality. We want to train people to create that wealth and to have a competitive workforce, and that seems to be totally forgotten. I'd just like to read to you. We've got a task force in the region of Waterloo. When those people came together they said: "Job training is the key to economic recovery. The training, skills development and education of our population is the only way to raise our standard of living." Again, there is the connection between wealth creation and improving our quality of life, whether it be our social or physical development, and yet this document makes no reference whatsoever to economic objectives.

I say to you, Mr Wilson, why do you want to continually refer to social objectives but not to economic objectives, which is the reality of today?

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Mr Sutherland: I tried to stay out of this debate as much as possible, but Ms Witmer mentioned that this government said it would be different and would work on the basis of consensus. The legislation we have before us is exactly that, consensus.

Mrs Cunningham: Be careful, Kimble. Be very careful.

Mr Sutherland: You've stated that the business steering committee—

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, your mike is on; other people's mikes aren't on. If you want to let them distract you, that's up to you.

Mr Sutherland: The business steering committee has said that it doesn't agree with everything that's in here. We've also heard in our presentations that the labour steering committee has said it doesn't agree with everything that's in here. The education training steering committee has said it doesn't agree with everything. It's a consensus of all those groups, not just one group, and that's what's tried to be reflected.

You mention that it doesn't deal with economic issues. If you look in clause (b), it talks about within competitive "Canadian and global economies." It mentions "productivity, quality, innovation." They're all economic issues. They're all the realities of the situation. Quite clearly it is stated in here. This document is a consensus of all the groups, not just one of the steering committees. Thank you.

Interjection.

The Chair: One moment. Mr Wilson wanted to join in.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right. Thanks, Mr Chair. I did want to say that you've raised the problem, Mrs Cunningham, of, once you start listing things, what gets left out? That's why we try to limit it to social and economic, expecting that would cover everything, including technological and ecological, but that is precisely the problem of who has been left out under the present arrangement.

As we note, just to take a fairly neutral example, the environment has been left out of so much of our economic considerations in the past. We have to make sure that groups are included in training. As it says clearly in the first section of the purpose clause, "To enable business and labour"—and that, I would think, is visionary in itself—"together with educators, trainers and representatives underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, to play a significant role in the design and delivery of labour force development programs and services." I think that's stated with a lot of precision and economy.

Mrs Cunningham: We have no problem with that. Our 1(b) is exactly that, your words.

Mr Gary Wilson: All I'm suggesting is that is the visionary aspect to this, bringing together the groups—

Mrs Witmer: That is not a vision, Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: —that are there, that need the training and that will benefit from it to design the program. We say that that is a significant, barrier-reducing step in the right direction.

Mrs Cunningham: We're talking about the purpose of the legislation here. I have brought forward, as an individual, my amendment. Since, in my view, the purpose is the most important part of any legislation, I would appreciate hearing from the government members. I haven't sat here by myself and I haven't heard any debate on the issue except from the parliamentary assistant, so I'll wait until they finish making their comments.

We've sat together now for four or five weeks. There are six members of the government present on the committee. My assumption, Mr Chairman, is that you're supposed to be just that. You're not supposed to always give your views, and I expect you won't, but I do expect that the other members of the committee will be speaking to the purpose of this legislation and to the inclusion of the purpose, and that is the basis for wealth and job creation. I'd like to hear their views on that, why it's a good idea, why it isn't a good idea and anything else that I may have said in support of it. I expect some feedback.

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): Kimble said it all for me.

The Chair: Is there any further discussion about Ms Cunningham's motion?

Mrs Cunningham: I have some more.

The Chair: Go ahead, then.

Mrs Cunningham: I think it would be fair later on during these proceedings to mention the names of the members of the committee and the fact that they have nothing to say about the purpose, including the member for Oxford, who made a statement that he didn't feel he wanted to get involved in this debate. I would like specifically to ask him

because I've a great deal of respect for him. I think he does represent the younger generation.

Let me say something before I put them on the spot. I didn't come to sit here on this committee or in this Legislative Assembly to listen to any government tell me what steering committees decided should happen in this province. That's what you've just said. Unless I see a difference down the road—and we've got some very important amendments, and by the end of the day we'll know. But I sat here to bring forth my ideas on behalf of the constituents I represent and I expect other people to bring forth their ideas.

I want to hear in public debate. We are the elected members. I'm not hearing any debate from anybody on this issue. I'm hearing from you, as the parliamentary assistant, as you regurgitate whatever you've been told to say from time to time and as well, with due respect, your own personal ideas, which I have had respect for. I wish that you could put them into some kind of action, because that's what we're trying to do here.

We have had members who have sat on this committee. Especially the member for Oxford has been here. That's why I'm singling him out. Some of the others haven't been here as often. I understand that, because I haven't always had to be here. But he specifically said that he was trying to stay out of the debate on this amendment. He said it. I heard him say it and I wrote it down. I'm wondering why. I would like him to explain why he feels that he shouldn't be part of the debate. This is his opportunity.

Interjection.

Mrs Cunningham: Why should he not be? He's elected. His friends would love to be here. Speak on behalf of your friends and let's hear it.

Mr Sutherland: I speak on behalf of my constituents.

Mrs Cunningham: Good.

Mr Sutherland: My constituents want to see this legislation go forward. They understand that there are some differing views about how exactly it should be worded, but they know that this is a good framework for establishing the process and they know that the actual reality of the success or failure of this is going to depend on how it operates. But they do know that it needs consensus of all groups, as I stated earlier.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you. Oh, sorry; that's great. To my way of thinking, what I'm going to be saying publicly after these hearings is that there are probably three different issues within the whole bill. This, to me, is the major issue. Even if we have difficulties over changing the makeup of the OTAB, which was the other area where we heard the most from the public, this one, to my way of thinking, is the most important one, because if we're afraid to talk about wealth in this province and we're afraid to put as our purpose the whole issue of job creation in this province, we've got a very big problem in why we're doing this at all.

I must say that the group I was part of represented all the partners and would have agreed with the inclusion of these words. There was great discussion around some of the amendments in London on the weekend. I will be

reporting back to them in this regard if in fact the government doesn't even want to take this to the new minister for consideration. This is the most important amendment.

The Liberals have given it an opportunity. We have given it an opportunity. We've had no debate. I don't consider what Mr Sutherland said debate. I consider it his philosophy on why he's here. He has given us no good reason, either personally as an individual or on behalf of his constituents, for not including the words "basis for wealth and job creation" in this legislation. I expected better than that. I'm finished.

Mr Ramsay: Why don't we call the vote?

The Chair: All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate by raising your hand. All those opposed, please indicate by raising your hand. Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham: I'd like to speak to clause 1(b) now.

Mr Ramsay: You're all together there.

Mrs Cunningham: No, I was specifically asked to deal with 1(a) and 1(b) separately.

The Chair: Not by me, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: I did ask at the beginning and I actually pointed it out to Mr Sutherland, when he started to talk to 1(a) and (b), that we were debating 1(a).

The Chair: Mr Sutherland is just a member of the committee.

Mrs Cunningham: Well—

The Chair: One moment.

Mrs Cunningham: I didn't even speak to 1(b) and (b.1).

The Chair: One moment. You indicated clearly that you were isolating your arguments. There's no dispute about that.

Mrs Cunningham: Then, Mr—

The Chair: One moment. All of the committee members understood that. At the same time, a motion is a motion. You can't vote on a motion piecemeal. I made every effort to accommodate every speaker in every stage of the debate around this particular motion. I called upon you on several occasions. I understand what you're saying now and I feel for you.

Mrs Cunningham: Well, Mr Chairman—

The Chair: One moment. But when I pause, as I did after the last exchange, after you indicated that you were finished—

Mrs Cunningham: I wasn't following your way of thinking at all. I'd like to get on the record on this—

The Chair: One moment.

Mrs Cunningham: —because I don't want you to make up your mind without hearing from me.

The Chair: One moment.

Mrs Cunningham: I mean, I've got notes to speak.

The Chair: Let me finish. I look about the room canvassing the bodies here, looking for people who want to indicate whether he or she wants to speak, and nobody indicates that he or she wants to speak. When we're dealing

with one motion—you read it out as one motion—there's a vote—

Mrs Cunningham: I asked to deal with 1(a) separately and I think you'll see that in the Hansard, Mr Chairman. You didn't say that was inappropriate. I did ask specifically to speak to 1(a) separately and then (b), and I haven't even spoken to (b.1).

The Chair: Is there unanimous consent—

Mrs Cunningham: To what?

The Chair: One moment—for the vote to be set aside so that there can be further debate on Ms Cunningham's motion?

Interjection: Agreed.

The Chair: Thank you. Ms Cunningham, go ahead.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you, Mr Chair. I was getting very nervous.

Interjection.

The Chair: Well, the response to, "Is there unanimous consent?" is either yes or no, and I didn't hear any noes.

Mrs Cunningham: If the committee can bear with me, I don't think 1(b) and (b.1) will stand much chance of survival without 1(a) having been accepted, but what we were trying to do in 1(b) was to put into words the criticism of the individual groups that talked about labour force development programs. It was made clear, I think, to us during the committee hearings that no one is interested in training for the sake of training. We didn't quite know how to deal with it because everybody had a different way of dealing with their concern around this clause, but they wanted to say that training must lead to employability and active participation in society. That's what they were saying, and how were we going to get individual employability into the legislation. I agree with the government that this would be a difficult thing to do. All we could do was to offer the word "appropriate" in 1(b). That was the only amendment we had, which would be to the government's (a) part.

If the motion is going to not be dealt with separately, the part separately, and I don't think it can be, perhaps the government would take that into consideration for an amendment of its own. It's kind of a motherhood statement but it does meet the needs of many groups. All we're doing in your 1(a) is putting in the word "appropriate." It's not a big deal but it's something you might want to consider.

Clause (b.1) deals with a lot of concerns of the presenters and with the most unrealistic aspect of the bill as outlined in the purpose clauses. In its current form, Bill 96 is expected to improve the lives of workers and potential workers. In our opinion, it's too broad a mandate for a bill. That, I think, is why the Liberals may have excluded the whole terminology. Instead of doing that, we're expanding upon it in (b.1). We're saying that the bill is established strictly to address publicly funded training for workers and potential workers who are interested in training in order to be able to participate in and contribute to the competitive economy in a meaningful way. Although access to OTAB-funded programs and services will lead to improving the lives of some workers and/or potential workers, it will

certainly not—and I'm using the words of so many others—improve the lives of all workers and/or potential workers.

We have qualified what this really means and we've improved your words, which are, "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers," by adding the phrase "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals." We've been very specific. The ideas were brought to us by a number of presenters, given the criticism of the clause itself. We believe the new wording is more realistic and less subjective.

The problem I've got—and you may be able to help me in this regard, because it's a process one—is that if you're going to call the vote on the whole amendment, then we're going to lose an opportunity to amend 1(a) independently by adding the word "appropriate," because I'm trying to deal with the whole thing here, and 1(b) by not expanding upon the clause as it is in the bill now. It would be my intent to offer both of those amendments subsequent to this debate so that the government can consider amending its clauses, as opposed to adding one and then amending it, which is inappropriate. I think you're quite right in taking it. But I would put you on notice that I will be offering these amendments to the bill as an amendment in itself, because it can't fly in this manner.

The Chair: I can tell you this, though, Ms Cunningham: Subject to what happens, again, when this matter is put to a vote, there is another amendment proposed for section 1 of the bill. Once that amendment that's proposed to section 1 of the bill is dealt with, then section 1, as amended or not, would be dealt with—

Mrs Cunningham: That's fine.

The Chair: —subject to, again, any unanimous agreement on the part of the committee to defer a vote on section 1. Once section 1 of the bill is dealt with, then there won't be any further amendments put to section 1. It will have been dealt with by the committee.

Mrs Cunningham: That's why I'm saying now that I'd like to amend the bill if I lose this one, because it adds a new part and you're going to deal with the whole. Then I would, after you've dealt with the other amendment to section 1, which I think is a Liberal motion, put forward another amendment. Do you want the amendment printed? Do I have to print it or can we just take it as our (b) being an amendment to your (a) and our (b.1) being an amendment to the government's (b)? It is printed.

The Chair: I understand that. It's not necessary.

Mrs Cunningham: Do you want us to have it printed appropriately?

The Chair: The standing orders don't require that motions, be they procedural or consisting of amendments, should be printed.

Mrs Cunningham: Okay.

The Chair: It would be most courteous, however, to the committee to either print it out or, if you're going to read it in, to read it most slowly so that everybody—

Mrs Cunningham: It is actually printed. It's just that we'll have to deal with it in a different way. Thank you.

The Chair: You deal with that as you see fit, subject to whatever the proper procedure will be determined to be. Go ahead, please.

Mrs Cunningham: I've given my reasons for the subsequent (b) amendment and the subsequent (b.1) amendment. I'd like to hear from the government on that, because it didn't speak to (b), the addition of the word "appropriate," and it didn't speak to our attempts to develop "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers," which seemed to be hanging on its own. We've added some words there to help the legislation be clarified. I'm wondering what the government thinks of that.

Mrs Witmer: I'd like to speak to the amendment in clause (b) of the purpose clause. As Ms Cunningham has indicated, we have added the words "appropriate labour force development programs and services." I think it's apparent, from our discussion here this morning and certainly from the delegations that appeared before us, that we need some clarification as to "labour force development programs." Nobody wants to train simply for the sake of training. We have to ensure that the training we do in this province is going to lead to jobs, to employability, and allow all individuals to actively participate in our society. Thus, we have added the words "appropriate labour force development programs."

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In dealing with the second part of the clause, 1(b.1), this deals, as I think has been indicated, with the most unrealistic aspect of this bill as it's outlined in the purpose clause. In its current form this bill is expected to improve "the lives of workers and potential workers." We believe that is far too broad a mandate for a bill which is established strictly to address publicly funded training for workers and potential workers who are interested in training in order to participate in, and contribute to, the competitive economy in a meaningful way.

Although access to OTAB-funded programs and services is certainly going to improve the lives of workers and potential workers in this province—that is, if they have access—I think we need to remember that it's not necessarily going to also improve the lives of all workers or potential workers. You can guarantee them access to OTAB, but you cannot guarantee that because of access to OTAB their lives will be improved. In fact, for some people it might lead to some hardships, for whatever reason.

We've added some new wording to that particular statement to qualify. Rather than just simply saying "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers," since there's no guarantee that this will happen, we've added the phrase "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals." We believe this new wording is more precise, more realistic and certainly less subjective. I would encourage the members of the government to seriously consider including that particular phrase.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. Mr Mills?

Mr Gordon Mills (Durham East): No, I'm just doing my button up.

Mrs Cunningham: That'll be a good quote. You better qualify that.

Mr Sutherland: Shirt button.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chairman, you're waiting. I think Ms Cunningham is ready to move some motions we haven't had tabled yet. I'd support her on that.

The Chair: But this motion is on the floor.

Mr Ramsay: Yes, I know. I just think I'd like to call for a vote, then.

The Chair: No, there'll be a vote when all of the discussion has ended.

Mr Klopp: We tried this once before, remember?

Mr Ramsay: Okay. Dianne, why don't you call for a vote?

The Chair: All those in favour, please indicate by raising their hands. All those opposed?

Mrs Cunningham: Tie vote.

Mr Offer: Methinks it's a tie.

Mrs Cunningham: We've got a problem. What happens on a tie?

The Chair: Recess for five minutes.

The committee recessed at 1134 and resumed at 1155.

The Chair: A vote had been called on Ms Cunningham's motion, which was an amendment to the bill, specifically to section 1 of the bill. The voices were equal upon the vote being called, and that is to say that there were as many in favour as there were opposed to the motion. That put the Chair into the very rare position of having to vote. I made reference to the treatise *Standing Committee Procedure: A Guide for Committee Chairmen*, compiled by—

Mrs Cunningham: Does it still say "Chairmen"?

The Chair: I've cited the name of the document—compiled by Smirle Forsyth, the assistant clerk, published under the authority of the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly in May 1985. I've also made reference to Erskine May, *Parliamentary Practice*, 21st edition, obviously published by Butterworths.

In the Forsyth treatise—and I'm referring to page 3—it's noted that, "To ensure confidence in the impartiality of the Chairman, the Chairman votes only when the voices are equal and then only in accordance with rules which preclude an expression of opinion upon the merits of a question." Some will be more relieved that others that I am precluded from expressing an opinion on the merits of the issue.

Forsyth, on page 23, in speaking of the casting vote, writes: "The Chairman casts a vote only when there is a tie. Since the exercise of this responsibility could involve the Chairman implicitly in partisan debate and thus weaken confidence in the Chairman's impartiality, certain conventions have developed to guide chairmen in the exercise of the casting vote." He goes on to identify three of those conventions.

In Erskine May, on page 351, there is discussion of the principles on which the Speaker gives the casting vote. Again three principles are listed there.

Once again, some on this committee should be more pleased than others that I'm not entitled to express an opinion on the merits of the question. However, in both Forsyth and Erskine May, when the principles which guide a Chair are listed, they have included the following principle—this is in Forsyth—"On an amendment to a bill, a casting vote should leave the bill in its existing form." In Erskine May the similar principle is stated. I trust that was one of the sources Mr Forsyth used when he prepared his treatise in 1985. One of the three principles is "that a casting vote on an amendment to a bill should leave the bill in its existing form."

Therefore, as Chair, voting when the voices are equal, I vote because I am compelled to vote by parliamentary procedure and practice, and not necessarily for any other reason. I am compelled to vote with the nays; that is, the people opposed to the motion. The motion is therefore defeated.

Mr Ramsay, you have a motion, I understand.

Mr Ramsay: Yes. I believe, though, that Mrs Cunningham has a motion that has not been tabled that would come before mine because it deals with 1(b).

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you, Mr Ramsay. It is with regret that you're not allowed your opinion, Mr Chair, because I'm totally convinced that you would be voting in favour of what the public stated as being a very big concern, and also in favour of the quality of debate, because I didn't get any quality from the other side, from the members. I got the marching orders from the parliamentary assistant. I hope he's going to drop that one now, because we have just lost a great opportunity in this province.

I'm prepared to put forward two amendments right now and I hope the committee members, to the best of their ability, will try and follow them. I've chosen not to have them put in print because they're in front of us. If you take a look at clauses 1(a) and (b) of the PC motion, if you take a look at (b), that's my amendment. That amendment will be to clause 1(a). Then the second amendment I'll put forward is (b.1), which will be an amendment to clause 1(b). If you can try to follow it, it will at least give me the confidence that there's some consideration given for it.

I have to read it into the record. I would move, Mr Chairman, in relation to Bill 96, that clause 1(a) be amended as follows, and it would read as such:

"to enable business and labour, together with educators, trainers and representatives of underrepresented or disadvantaged groups, to play a significant role in the design and delivery of appropriate labour force development programs and services."

I simply added the word "appropriate." I added the word "appropriate" for the reasons that I expressed before, and that was that so many of the individuals who came before the committee were concerned about what labour force development programs and services. They had all kinds of adjectives to describe what they were best interested in. We didn't know how to deal with it, but we felt it was a concern, so we just tried to strengthen it in a very minor way by adding the word "appropriate." I don't know

if it would add that much to the bill or take that much away, but it might in fact reflect upon the wishes, in some way, of the members of the public who came before us and said we should be designating exactly what we mean. That's why we did it.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to support my colleague's amendment and really ask the government to consider that, and that is just the inclusion of one word, "appropriate," in order to ground this first clause in the purpose section in reality, so that we don't raise expectations of people more than we should. OTAB will be a group designated to design—and it says here "deliver" but we'll talk about that a little later in the objects clauses—"appropriate labour force development programs and services." I think it just is a good inclusion. Obviously, it doesn't detract from the goal of the bill or the goal of this purpose, but I think just grounds it in reality.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd like to say that we think the concept of appropriateness is already in the bill. I point out to you clause 1(b) already and paragraph 5 of subsection 4(1). Some of the goals of labour force development programs and services are set out there as being "the enhancement of skills, productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness." Then, in paragraph 12 of subsection 4(1), it's stated that the programs and services are to be "designed, delivered and evaluated in light of the needs and priorities of all Ontario's employers, workers and potential workers."

Secondly, the idea of "appropriate" also raises the question of who decides what "appropriate" is. It can be too restrictive in that sense. What some people think is appropriate won't meet other people's needs, and you get into arguments about whether that program is truly appropriate simply on the discussion of the term.

I would agree with Ms Cunningham that no one's interested in training for training's sake. We think that by those provisions I've just listed we have met that need in the bill as it sits now.

Mrs Cunningham: Obviously, when we took our concerns to legislative counsel to asked for a way of dealing with those concerns the use of the word "appropriate" was given to us as a response, so that's what we're doing here. You've said that the definition of what "appropriate" really means may be a problem. We've got some lawyers finding reasons to disagree. God help Ontario if we didn't have the lawyers. Who would keep this economy moving? Give me a break.

Anyway, once again, we haven't taken this to the Supreme Court of Canada around the use of the word "appropriate," but if that's the problem from the government's point of view, so be it. I'm more of a risk-taker than that. That's why it's in here. Obviously the legislative counsel that assisted us was as well. Mr Chairman, what can I say? I'm not going to argue for this one. I've got bigger wars to deal with than this one. We've lost the major one, so I'll just let this one lie.

The Chair: All right, Ms Cunningham's motion is as follows:

Ms Cunningham moves that clause 1(a) be amended by adding the word "appropriate" in line 6 before "labour force."

All in favour, please indicate. Opposed? The motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham: The next one is an amendment which we did attempt before. I was thinking that perhaps the government defeated this one because it was part of the whole, meaning three parts, and perhaps on its own it could stand. The Liberals chose to exclude the words "and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" in 1(b)) because they felt that alone they didn't mean anything. We've taken the opposite approach. As indicated, this was a problem for many of the presenters. In 1(b)) I would read into the record the amendment we are offering.

It's adding the words "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals" to follow the wording in 1(b)). It would now be after line 11. I'm not sure you need it all read into the record. I think it explains it.

The effort that we made before in this regard was with relation to the words "improve the lives of workers and potential workers" because many of the presenters felt that this was unrealistic standing alone, that it had to be defined further as part of the purpose clause. By not expanding on it, no one wanted to say what that really meant as part of Bill 96. By putting this amendment forward, in our opinion it's too broad a mandate for a bill which is clearly established to address publicly funded training for workers and potential workers who are interested in training in order to be able to participate in and contribute to the competitive economy in a meaningful way.

We've used some of the words, by the way, of presenters in putting our arguments forward here, and also in stating that although the act says OTAB-funded programs and services will lead to improving the lives of some workers and/or potential workers, it will certainly not—and I underline the word again—improve the lives of all workers and/or potential workers. We wanted to qualify the words "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" by adding the qualifier. This is how we think, and how the members of the public who came before the committee thought, that in fact we would improve the lives of workers and potential workers, and that's by helping them identify and pursue "realistic personal development and economic goals."

We thought that as part of the whole purpose of this legislation it would've already been stated in the bill, according to the amendments that were put forward, that the best way to improve the lives of workers and/or potential workers would be by letting them clearly know that we're in the business, through training and education, of wealth creation for the quality of their life. Government disagrees with that. However, I still think it's important to qualify what we want them to understand in the way of improvement of their lives, and that's why we've added the words "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals."

I would be interested in hearing what the parliamentary assistant will be saying to that.

1210

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, I think it raises the problem of, when you do qualify something, what is achieved by it? It raises problems in its own right. For instance, you mentioned "realistic personal development." Far from making it less subjective, I think that makes it much more subjective in the sense that what's realistic to one person isn't realistic to another. Even what would be considered personal development for one isn't seen that way by another. You run the risk here of raising things that are irresolvable.

But the way we have it listed, we think that does cover something very definite and restricts it to labour force development programs and services and what they are expected to achieve in the end—among other things we've listed, wealth creation and job creation that we expect will flow from that in the way we've set it out in this legislation.

Mrs Cunningham: Before you go any further, please show me where it says "wealth creation" in the bill. Show me right now. You just said it. Show me where it's in the bill.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, but in the context—

The Chair: Okay, Ms Cunningham, let him do that.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you, Mr Kormos. What I'm saying is that these are the things that are going to flow from it, obviously. As I just mentioned previously, we're not setting up training for training's sake. They have definite goals in mind. We don't expect that workers' lives will be improved with a shortage of wealth or a decline in wealth or a shortage of jobs.

Mrs Cunningham: What does that mean?

Mr Gary Wilson: It means that we expect—

Mrs Cunningham: What does that mean, what you just said, "We don't think workers' lives will be improved by the creation of wealth or the shortage of wealth"? Please tell me what that means?

Mr Gary Wilson: I said "the decline in wealth."

The Chair: One moment, please.

Mrs Cunningham: Or decline.

Mr Gary Wilson: Well—

The Chair: Please wait until one of you is finished before the other poses yet another question or wait until one of you has posed a question before one of you begins responding.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks, Mr Kormos. What we're seeing here is that in the way this is set out the improvement in the lives of workers and potential workers will come from the development of new skills, productivity and portability of skills, say, to give them more choice in the kinds of jobs they're carrying out. But beyond that, among the labour market partners there will be the benefit that flows from having programs that are designed to carry out the kinds of goals that all the labour market partners share. I reiterate that it actually takes away from what we've got now to qualify it, because it's too restrictive.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to support Mrs Cunningham's amendment in that I believe it gives direction to the board that is going to come together for the first time. Again, the purpose clause is the most important part of the legislation. It does lay out the direction. Qualifying it, if you will, gives some definite direction that it's not a social agency but that's it an economic development agency. How is it going to improve or try to improve the lives of workers and potential workers? By helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals. This is important, because one of the big questions we have for training today is, training for what?

I think the general population is starting to understand that training and retraining are going to be very important and vital to their livelihoods. But I think many of us, myself included, aren't sure of what the jobs are going to be in the next 5, 10 and 15 years and need some guidance as

to what our goals need to be, because we're not even sure what the employment is going to be out there.

I think it just gives a bit of direction, that this is what OTAB needs to do. It needs to be a bit of a counselling service to help people set some targets, help them better their lives by establishing some realistic goals. I would support it. I think it's a good direction to have in the bill.

The Chair: Ms Cunningham's motion is that clause 1(b) be amended by adding the words "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals" in line 11 after the words "potential workers."

Mrs Cunningham: That's correct.

The Chair: All those in favour, please indicate. All those opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

We are recessed until 2 o'clock. Thank you.

The committee recessed at 1216.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 1405.

The Chair: It's 2:05. We shall continue to wait until all three caucuses are represented.

The committee recessed at 1405 and resumed at 1410.

The Chair: We can begin now. Mr Ramsay.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, just before we begin this afternoon, given that we had unanimous consent this morning for Ms Cunningham, I was wondering if the committee would agree, in the hope of trying to get through this week, that we could have unanimous consent that we will finish section 4 by the end of today. I know we will probably want to spend a lot of time on the composition of the board in the next day and the days after. If we had a commitment that we were going to get through section 4 this afternoon, that would help facilitate the process.

The Chair: What if we made that commitment, but it doesn't happen? What happens then?

Mr Sutherland: Well, working on the basis that at the end of the day, wherever we're at, we'd vote on the rest of them up to and the end of section 4.

The Chair: You're basically proposing time allocation, to wit, that at the end of the day all of those sections up to and including number 4 will be voted on, whether or not the amendments have been read and whether or not there's been any debate.

Mr Sutherland: I would hope that the amendments would be read and then voted upon.

The Chair: To hope is one thing; to achieve it is another. There doesn't seem to be much of a response to your proposition.

Mr Sutherland: I'm just asking.

The Chair: But I think the spirit of it is a good one. Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: I would just like to say that that's the goal I'm shooting for.

Mr Sutherland: Okay, great.

Mrs Witmer: We'll support you.

Mr Ramsay: So we'll get going, and in fact you will see by this that I'm just going to make some very brief comments on this, because I want to get off the purpose clause and get on to section 4.

I move that clause 1(d) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(d) to promote Ontario's linguistic duality and recognize and support the diversity and pluralism of Ontario's population."

This is consistent with what I've been saying with the purpose clause, that again I find that the language that comes before what I have proposed, that in the original act, is kind of wishy-washy; and reference to being consistent with the economic and social policies of the government I think really takes away what OTAB was intended to do, and that was to be client-driven, to be driven by the workers and the employers, who have to ensure that they have highly skilled people in the Ontario workforce.

I'm not going to belabour the point. That's what I would like to have done to clean this up; one more attempt to try to do that, and I let it go at that.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think what you're setting out, Mr Ramsay, does not help in the overall design of the legislation. We think it's very important to make clear that it is in congruence with the policies of the government, and that's the way the legislation is set out now. So we don't find that a helpful amendment.

Mr Ramsay: I have to accept that. I don't agree, but I have to accept that. I think OTAB should not be ruled by the government of the day, whomever that government may be, but it needs to be a vehicle driven by the workers and the employers out there to make sure that training is cogent and realistic to what the needs are. But I have no further comment on that motion.

The Chair: All in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please indicate. Opposed? The motion's defeated.

Shall section 1 of the bill carry? All in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 1 of the bill carries.

We are now dealing with section 2. Any debate around section 2 of the bill?

Shall section 2 of the bill carry? All in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 2 of the bill carries.

We are now dealing with section 3 of the bill. Any debate around section 3 of the bill?

Shall section 3 of the bill carry? All in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 3 of the bill carries.

Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: I move that paragraph 1 of subsection 4(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"To promote, support, fund, coordinate and evaluate labour force development programs and services for the private and public sector."

What I've done in that amendment is only to delete two words, but I think it's very important. I've deleted the words "design" and "provide" because I feel very strongly that OTAB should not be providing training programs: It should be the coordinating body; it should be the facilitator. It is, if you will, the animator at the local level, which brings everybody together to make sure that training programs are coordinated in the community, that the training programs that are required are available and to make sure that workers understand they're out there and to help give access.

I do not see us establishing a bureaucracy of government, regardless that it's a schedule 4 agency, actually providing programs. I don't see OTAB running a school or putting on courses. To me, that's not what the intent of OTAB is. It's just to bring all the partners together to make sure we promote, support, fund, coordinate and evaluate labour force development programs and services for both the private and public sectors. I never envisioned that it would actually be a provider of programs.

I don't believe that's the government's job. In fact, government needs to get out of the job of providing

services to people; government needs to be more a facilitator. In some of the language being used in some of the books written on this subject of late, the analogy is given that government should be getting into the business more of steering but not rowing.

That's why I object to this. OTAB should be the steerer, the facilitator, to make sure that all these other functions are happening, that we are promoting, we are supporting, we are funding, we're coordinating—and that we evaluate, because evaluation is very important, and we're certainly going to talk to that later on.

But it should not be a provider and getting into the business of designing programs. We've got private trainers, we've got community colleges, we've got school boards, we've got universities, we've got the community trainers. These people know how to design courses, they know how to provide them. The resources are out there. That's the point I wanted to make. You need a body like OTAB, though, to try to bring coordination to all of this, and that's what that's for, but not to get into the business of delivering these services.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm pleased, Mr Ramsay, to see that you agree with most of the verbs that are there to see what OTAB is set out to do in this first part of the objects. "Design," though, is—well, they're all important. "Design" and "provide" we consider to be very important too for OTAB. "Design" in part because of the experience that will be coming into OTAB, that the directors will be picking up through the operation of the board and to have the ability of designing programs on the basis of what they're hearing from the labour market partners. We consider that to be a very important aspect.

As to as the provision of services, one of the things we heard in the submissions was the need for research on training needs and the success of programs. As it points out in the object, it will be for services as well as programs. So it's important that that's an element of the service that OTAB will provide.

There are still aspects, say career counselling, that would be involved; keeping track of the apprenticeship progress of various candidates is another aspect of the kind of provision of services that is seen here.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like a little further explanation on the word "provide." I guess we can take very loosely the definition—and it is defined in the act—of what labour force development programs and services means. It says here, "includes programs and services with respect to labour force training and adjustment and with respect to entry and re-entry into the labour force." So what you're telling me is that OTAB would actually put on courses?

Mr Gary Wilson: Not in that sense. For instance, "coordinate" and "support," these other descriptions, again suggest that role of overseeing programs that are already being provided by other deliverers. But as I say, the research aspect is very much a provision of a service, as well as some of the programs that are now carried out, like apprenticeship; that some evaluation of that would be carried out and be considered to be a provision of a program.

1420

Mr Ramsay: The only thing I'm worried about is that, to me, "provide" means more than research. It says here that it would provide labour force development programs, and programs are defined in the bill as "includes programs and services with respect to labour force training and adjustment."

To me, a program is something you put on for people; it's not doing research. I'm just concerned that we're going to set up a sixth provider of training. We say in the act that we're going to use the five providers of training that are out there in the province, and I agree with that; in fact, we talk to that later on in a further amendment. But I don't understand why government wants OTAB to get into the provision of labour force development programs.

That's all I'm concerned about. Everything else is great. It needs to promote, support, fund, coordinate, but I'm not sure that the people at the local level or at the Ontario board are going to have the experience to actually start to design and provide programs. We're looking at a sixth school training in the province, and that's all I'm trying to prevent. I see OTAB as being the coordinating body to make sure we're all, as I said in my opening remarks, not only in the same canoe but all paddling to the same place. I don't see that we want to authorize OTAB to be the sixth entity of training in Ontario.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's not what we have in mind. As to designing, it's at least clear in my mind that it would be an important ability for OTAB to be able to design programs on the basis of the information that the labour market partners are providing. I'd like to turn it over to Peter Landry, if I may, just to answer your other concern about how OTAB will be affecting the programs that are in the field.

Mr Peter Landry: The concept of delivery of programs was not to do what is currently done by colleges, school boards or community-based trainers in the actual teaching of courses, for example. We were thinking more about the kind of services that currently exist at the Ministry of Skills Development; for example, the development of training standards for trades, which the ministry does now by bringing labour and business together. That would be a service they could provide, and the whole business of certification, the development of common standards, the office of labour adjustment and those kinds of programs at Labour. There are a number of client services delivered by ministries that don't fit into the teaching aspect that I think you're referring to. That's the kind of thing we have in mind.

Mr Ramsay: I accept that explanation. I think that's a good explanation. I'm just wondering if OTAB, on reading this first object in the bill—do you think somebody could interpret the word "provide" in relation to labour force development programs to mean, "We have the mandate to teach programs"?

All I'm saying is that it's so broad. I agree with you that OTAB should be doing what you've talked about too: setting standards, doing the research. You didn't envision, and I accept that, that OTAB should actually put on teaching

programs, but I'm just thinking that one could translate that to mean providing training.

Mr Landry: If they did choose to interpret "provide" in that sense, they would then have to also develop the infrastructure to do the teaching and basically replace colleges and so on. I think there's enough accountability and control, if you want, by the government—through estimates, for example, where OTAB is going to get its money—to prevent that from happening. I would be very surprised, though, if someone interpreted it that way, because just the replication of infrastructure in itself would be enormous and obviously not desirable.

Mr Ramsay: In other words, it's not the intention of the government that OTAB provide training courses itself?

Mr Landry: I think we have to look at it from the other way, that we don't want it to be interpreted that OTAB does not have the ability to provide some of the services that we think are necessary for it to develop, for example, the development of common standards. There's a role in OTAB, or a body that is not a neutral body, to do that.

Mr Sutherland: Also, we said we're taking the existing programs already there and consolidating them under OTAB, so those programs that exist are going to be provided. The sense I'm getting from you, Mr Ramsay, is whether they are going to be the deliverers of the actual program, and I don't think that's the intent. They'll still be the providers of those programs that I believe we presented as a list to the committee. Are they going to be the actual deliverers? I don't think that's the intent.

I also think that with the proposed amendment saying that local boards shall be established, the intent is clearly that it will be farmed out at the local level and that those groups already being the actual deliverers will probably continue to be the deliverers.

Mr Offer: In your response to Mr Ramsay's amendment, you spoke about the future of OTAB and the ability for OTAB to develop standards, to work into the development of standards. If that is to be one of their objects, where is it that government will still stand accountable to the end product of OTAB?

Mr Gary Wilson: Government is one of the partners in this arrangement, and it's accountable to make sure that those programs do the job of meeting the training needs.

Mr Offer: Could you point to that part of the legislation that bears out what you just said?

Mr Gary Wilson: That the government's one of the partners, you mean?

Mr Offer: Yes. Just point that out to me.

Mr Gary Wilson: As for the accountability, as we've mentioned sometimes in the past, it exists in all kinds of forms. The minister's directive is one of the clearest, most direct ways of making sure that OTAB meets the needs of the citizens of Ontario, to see that it's doing its job. In subsection 28(1), the annual report to the minister on its affairs; subsections 26(1) and (2). It's also a crown agency. So it's in all those ways, and of course it's set out that it has to work within the social and economic goals of the province.

Mr Offer: Is that the completion of the answer?

Mr Gary Wilson: They're aspects. As I say, there's the strong accountability to the government that the program meets the government's objectives.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, you wanted to join in?

Mr Sutherland: As Mr Wilson has said and as we've stated several times, there's the minister's directive, there's the obligation among the chief executive officer to follow the directive. It is subject to policies of the provincial government, the goals and objectives, subject to committees of the Legislature, the estimates process. Besides the directive, they have to present annual reports. The minister can ask them to present specific plans, three-year or five-year plans. A whole host of those things are outlined in the legislation, types of requirements and accountability procedures that you may not find in some of the other establishments of agencies.

The Chair: Ms Witmer, did you want to join in on this particular issue?

Mrs Witmer: I will, actually, because we're talking here about government accountability, and I don't see any direct fiscal accountability by the government. I'd like to know, if I'm not finding that type of information—I guess I'm concerned that we're going to have the same type of body set up here as we have with the WCB. In that case, there's also a lack of direct fiscal accountability by the government. We know what type of financial problems have been created there, and I'm not optimistic that this is going to be any different.

1430

Mr Offer: I've listened closely to the responses of the members of the government, and I very much disagree with your usage of those particular sections. They do not lend towards accountability in areas where OTAB has devised the development of standards. The areas you've alluded to—estimates—will not in any way provide an accountability in the development of standards. I'm using that one example. In the area of a program, you use the legislation, and the legislation would allow a minister to say, "We think it is in the public interest for OTAB to investigate and to develop standards." In fact, it could be much broader than that. OTAB would then be charged with the responsibility of the development of standards. There is no form of review and accountability in terms of the end product. You can't point to estimates. You can't say there's going to be a three-year plan as an answer to a review and as an answer to the formation of any accountability between OTAB and the government.

If you are hinging this all on some broad directive, the best interests of the public of the province of Ontario, if that's what you're hinging accountability on, then let's just say that, and you shall live with the consequences.

Mr Gary Wilson: It's a bit vague in my mind what you're asking, Mr Offer, particularly coming out of this amendment.

Mr Offer: Let me be very specific. Coming out of the amendment? My question came as a result of staff's response to Mr Ramsay's amendment. One of the things

they spoke about was that the OTAB group could be charged with the responsibility of developing standards. My question is, where is the accountability? Where is the responsibility built into the legislation that at the end of this review, at the end of the implementation of the development of standards, people in this province would have the opportunity of saying: "What they did was wrong. What they did was in error, and we want to be able to review that and change that before they are implemented"? Where is it in the legislation?

Mr Gary Wilson: It's in section 2, where it talks about what the responsibility of the minister is. The minister is responsible for the administration of the act. If the act isn't doing the job, the minister is responsible to make sure it is.

I think the other thing that you're not taking into account is that the labour market partners themselves share the interest in making sure that OTAB is doing the job.

Mr Offer: I don't want to prolong this, but the fact is that people can be, with the best of intentions, working diligently on this, yet what they devise may be something which those who are going to be affected do not agree with. What mechanism is there for those who are going to be affected to say, "What they did was wrong, and this is why it's wrong, and this is why it should be changed"? Is the only mechanism they have to go to the OTAB group, or can they go to the minister? And if they can go to the minister, where is it in the legislation?

Mr Gary Wilson: In the first place, you talk about the people who are affected. The whole idea is to bring into the decision-making process the people who are affected. Secondly, there is the accountability we've just gone over with regard to the government making sure this fits into its policies, and, as it says clearly in section 2, the minister is responsible for the act.

Mr Sutherland: We've said that the minister—it's right in the legislation—can issue directives. The chief executive officer of OTAB must follow those directives. That seems like a pretty clear line of accountability to me, that if people want to go directly to the minister, if you want to raise an issue in the House or whatever, it goes to the minister. If the minister feels there's a problem, responds to it and issues a directive, OTAB is responsible for putting that in.

The minister can also, as outlined in the legislation, direct what should be in OTAB's annual reports or specialized reports. If they're working on developing these standards, people feel it's in there, the minister can direct that a report be given to him specifically on that issue, and OTAB has to be accountable to the minister.

The minister is accountable to the public. He's accountable in the House. He's accountable in all those ways. So it's in there, it's in the actual legislation. Beyond that, I'm not sure what greater degree of accountability you would like. I don't know how you devise more accountability than directly to the minister and him able to issue directives.

Mr Offer: It's like the WCB.

Mr Sutherland: No, it's not.

Mrs Witmer: Well, I think it is WCB all over again. I think I've pointed out that there's no fiscal accountability, and now Mr Ramsay and Mr Offer have both stressed the fact that there's no accountability as far as standards are concerned. I think we only have to take a look at education, where the minister has the same responsibility, yet the public now has been saying for a number of years that there's no accountability and it's very difficult for the public to get any action.

I don't see how anyone who's unhappy with OTAB and the standards that have been set up by the OTAB board is going to have any mechanism for ensuring that changes take place. This statement here says absolutely nothing.

Mr Gary Wilson: Which statement is this?

Mrs Witmer: "'Minister' means the minister responsible for the administration of this act." That means absolutely nothing. There is no guarantee that certain standards will be adhered to, that people will have access to changing those standards. There's nothing. There is no accountability to the local taxpayer, none whatsoever.

Mr Sutherland: Just to deal with these specific accountabilities, let's go to subsection 5(1): "The minister may issue written directives to OTAB on matters that relate to its objects and that are, in the minister's opinion, of significant public interest."

Mrs Witmer: He may.

Mr Sutherland: We go on to (2): "The directors shall ensure that the chief executive officer implements the minister's directives promptly and efficiently."

Then we go on to section 7, where it talks about what some of the limitations are. There are limitations on the holding of real property and on the borrowing of money, limitations on investment.

Section 25: The minister must approve OTAB's annual fiscal estimates. Section 26: The minister must approve OTAB's annual multi-year plans. Section 27: OTAB must have an approved auditing system and submit annual audits to the minister for approval. Section 28: OTAB must submit an annual report to the minister.

Clearly, they're very significant type of accountability procedures both from an operational standpoint and a financial standpoint. I think any corporation being set up would say they're satisfactory lines of accountability.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think—

The Chair: You adopt what Mr Sutherland said?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you. Ms Witmer.

Mrs Witmer: I have no further comments.

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, please.

1440

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): I think it's important that we not overlook the Ontario Hydro experience in terms of the proposals that are set forth in this particular bill. Ontario Hydro is now subject to ministerial directives, and experience has taught us that those are not issued on a regular basis; rather, they are an extraordinary

measure and they are issued to redirect what appears to be a runaway train. So they do not serve to lend the kind of day-to-day accountability which I think the people of the province are looking for.

Secondly, what they have done is they have put the deputy minister on the board. Notwithstanding the fact that the deputy minister is found on the board, when I asked the minister in the House why it is that the board of directors spent \$500,000 on expanding their boardroom, he indicated that he was not aware of that. Furthermore, he went so far as to indicate that this was the board's responsibility and not the minister's responsibility. That is symptomatic of the response, to be fair, that has been given by all three governments over the years with respect to problems at Ontario Hydro: "They're essentially an independent operation. They operate at arm's length, and when they do these things, gosh darn it, we wish they wouldn't, we wish we had more control over them. But I'm not at the end of the day really accountable for these kinds of things. They've got their own directors, and they've got special responsibilities in law, fiduciary responsibilities to the ratepayers."

I don't think you can argue in any objective or legal sense that at the end of the day there is real accountability found within this particular bill. There isn't. I think what you're going to see is the minister saying: "They have a board. They have all of the important stakeholder groups properly represented, and we have to provide them with a certain amount of independence. They're addressing these issues in an intelligent and methodical manner and they're going to work things out. It's their problem."

The problem, of course, is that we don't get to vote for those directors. We get to vote for our members of Parliament. So I don't think you can argue that in any objective sense there's real accountability.

The Chair: Yes, sir, Mr Sutherland.

Mr Sutherland: Just a comment: I would challenge, looking at how corporate structures are set up in the private sector—there are lines of accountability here. You can bring in Ontario Hydro if you want, you can bring in WCB if you want, but if you look at their initial legislation, how they were established, and compare them to how this legislation is established, you will see that there are much greater lines of accountability for the minister, much stronger lines, much stronger directive authority than was in the initial stages of Ontario Hydro. Now, that may be the case right now, but when it started, I would suggest that's not necessarily the case. Certainly, as your colleague from Renfrew could tell us, there have even been attempts where that was thought to be an awful thing that this type of directive be given. But I think we need to compare some of the originals and then put it on the table.

Mr Gary Wilson: I just want to say in response to Mr McGuinty that unlike WCB and Hydro, OTAB has no ability to raise money on its own. It's got to depend on government money, and that's a very strong control.

Mr McGuinty: With respect to that, there's specific authority given in here—I'm not sure which section it is—that allows it to raise fees. We have expressed a concern,

and so have many in the private sector, as to the limits that are going to be connected ultimately with how much can be raised and how it's going to be used. They do have that authority, so I'm not sure how you could make that kind of comment.

Secondly, if the NDP government saw it as something positive to change the Power Corporation Act to add the deputy minister to the board to ensure accountability, why aren't they doing it with respect to OTAB?

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd like to respond to that. The fees—and this was well discussed in the hearings—are raised only by regulation, and the government has control over the setting of those regulations. So there's a strong control. It's not visualized that the fees will fund OTAB in any case, but they're there for other reasons. It's definitely coming out of the consolidated revenue fund to run OTAB.

Mr McGuinty: With respect, Mr Wilson, there is nothing here in black and white that lends any comfort that there's somehow some limitation on these fees. To say that it's going to be subject to some mechanism that's going to be controlled by regulation doesn't lend much comfort.

I want you to answer my other question: If your government saw it as a significant improvement in terms of ensuring public accountability for Ontario Hydro that you put a deputy minister on the board, why are you not doing the same with respect to OTAB?

Mr Gary Wilson: What we're doing with OTAB is entirely separate as far as meeting the goals of the training needs of Ontario. It's to include the labour market partners in the running of the board, with government sharing responsibility. What we've set up here is a very tight accountability system, as I am suggesting: the way the agency will be funded but also the accountability mechanisms that are there already, which my colleague Mr Sutherland so clearly articulated.

Mr McGuinty: Maybe I'll just end this on this note. You may see it as sharing responsibility, but I see it as an abdication of responsibility on the government's part.

Mr Gary Wilson: I can tell you, the labour market partners are very pleased with this arrangement. They just want to get on with it.

Mr Offer: In response to a comment made by either the parliamentary assistant or by Mr Sutherland, I think you have to recognize that in May 1992 there was approved by the cabinet of this province a new schedule 4 agency that spoke to administration of agencies, and the second document was The Establishment and Scheduling of Agencies.

There was a new addition called a schedule 4 agency. OTAB is going to be a schedule 4 agency. Under the degree of funding, it's stated that funding can come from the consolidated revenue fund for the startup of this agency, but for the ongoing operation of the agency, it will be from revenue from its own programs. It will be self-generating. This is a decision approved by cabinet, May 1992.

Members of the government may not be aware of it, but we have already had it circulated throughout this committee, so to say that the money for OTAB is going to come from the consolidated revenue fund flies in the face

of a schedule 4 agency as approved by cabinet in May 1992, of which OTAB is going to be one such structure.

Mr Gary Wilson: The purpose of making it a schedule 4 agency was to allow it flexibility to do its job; for instance, to allow the labour market partners to participate in a crown agency. Although some will be set up to conform to the financial arrangements you mentioned, OTAB clearly is not one of those. The programs that are being run through the ministries now are funded almost totally out of the consolidated revenue fund, and this will continue. Only a small amount of the money will be raised through the fees. That is the reason. It's also to allow the employees of OTAB to come under the Public Services Act. In that sense, schedule 4 allows it the flexibility that's going to be needed to do its job.

Mr McGuinty: I just want to pursue this matter of the schedule 4 agencies. Is there any other agency that is properly called a schedule 4 agency?

Mr Landry: There are no other schedule 4 agencies.

1450

Mr McGuinty: As I understand it, it says—and there appears to be no exception to this—that the design of a schedule 4 agency is such that it's to be completely funded out of the revenue generated by its programs. This apparently is the very first schedule 4 agency, yet it constitutes an exception to schedule 4 agencies. Am I correct? This is an exception to schedule 4 agencies?

Mr Gary Wilson: It's a type of schedule 4. It allows flexibility. You can't say this is going to be—

Mr McGuinty: I don't see that flexibility in the definition, from the material handed out by the clerk. There are no ifs, ands or buts.

Mr Gary Wilson: I haven't got that information in front of you.

Mr McGuinty: I have a document here, *The Establishment and Scheduling of Agencies*. It says, "Approved by cabinet May 1992." It says, "Revised to include new schedule 4," and under schedule 4 it says: "Schedule 4 is for operational agencies that provide services to the public, often in partnership with the private sector, broader public sector or other levels of government...are or are intended to be completely funded out of the revenue generated by the programs. These agencies may receive loans or subsidies from the consolidated revenue fund in startup and initial phases of their operations and/or when they are directed by the responsible minister for reasons of government policy to carry out programs or activities that will incur deficits."

Then it goes on to talk about other matters which are not related to financing. I don't see any exceptions here.

Mr Gary Wilson: I guess you're seeing one here. It's not set up in that way. There are aspects of the schedule 4 that are listed there.

Mr McGuinty: Then either it's not properly a schedule 4 agency and it's been designated in error, or it constitutes an exception to a schedule 4, when it's supposed to be the first schedule 4, and the financial criteria haven't been properly drafted. There's something amiss here.

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Landry will clarify this.

Mr Landry: The act itself doesn't refer to schedule 4 agency. It is an administrative arrangement by Management Board. We have sought guidance and clarification on the policy based on earlier comments during the hearings, and the directive is intended to refer to "usual"; in future, usual schedule 4s will have that component. However, scheduled agencies can be anomalous, and that is what this agency will be.

The feature we were looking for in schedule 4 for OTAB was not revenue generation but was around the status of civil servants. We wanted a board that was able to function independently, to make decisions, to be a real operational board, but we did not want to jeopardize the status of the civil servants who work currently in programs. That's why we went for a schedule 4 model, and it is. We've sought clarification on that issue based on comments from Mr Offer earlier, and we understand, as I said, that usually schedule 4s may have that feature, but this one will not.

Mr McGuinty: All right. So we're going to have a creature here, OTAB, which is partly a schedule 4 agency as described in this document and which in other ways will not fit within that definition. Is that correct?

Mr Landry: It will not fit into the specific definition there. It will be anomalous to that, yes.

Mr McGuinty: Then why can't we see something in black and white that tells us what OTAB is going to look like in terms of its ability to raise funds? You're just telling us that, no, it doesn't fit within this; it's something else.

Mr Landry: Because I think we have put in the act reference to how it will get its funding through the estimates process, and that it does have an ability to raise fees, but only as permitted by the government through regulation. It is much more tightly controlled than an agency that is out as a revenue-making entity.

Mr McGuinty: Is it your intention to put out a kind of a subset for schedule 4 agencies?

Mr Landry: We can ask Management Board to do that. We don't design the administrative features for scheduling. That is done centrally by Management Board. We can certainly ask whether they wish to clarify that, but that has not been our responsibility.

Mr McGuinty: As I'm sure you are aware, because you've been here during the course of the hearings, this issue as to how much and by which means fees are going to be raised is very controversial. If you could lend some strength to the position you're taking by reducing something to writing in black and white that can assure people that, no, this is not properly a schedule 4 agency, that there are some restrictions with respect to what it can do in terms of raising money, I think that would be a very positive development.

Mr Gary Wilson: The restrictions are already in the act as far as how OTAB will be funded. It's set out already: through the estimates process.

Mr McGuinty: In the act it says in section 21 that they can charge fees. What else is there?

Mr Gary Wilson: Through the estimates process. It's already funded. The programs that are already being met or delivered through the various ministries will be consolidated under OTAB.

Mr McGuinty: But where are the restrictions in terms of the kinds of fees it can raise?

Mr Gary Wilson: The restrictions are in the regulations, but the fees right now are—

Mr McGuinty: Where are the regulations?

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, on a point of order.

The Chair: It's probably not a point of order, but you wanted to say something.

Mr Sutherland: I want to say that I'm getting the sense that we're having a question and answer back and forth like we're questioning a witness, and I thought we were on discussion and debate. I don't mean to say that the points Mr McGuinty and his colleagues are bringing up on the accountability process are not important, because I think they are important questions. All I want to do is draw us back to what I thought—the amendment we're dealing with is Mr Ramsay's, and I'm not quite sure if the accountability process directly relates to Mr Ramsay's amendment at this time. It may relate to other sections of the bill as we go forward. I'm just wondering, Mr Chair, do you see the question and answer on accountability as within the context of debating this amendment?

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr Sutherland. Go ahead, Mr McGuinty.

Mr McGuinty: I can understand what you're saying, but there's nothing in this bill which restricts, places a limit, on the fees to be charged. It says in section 21 that they can charge fees for services in the amounts fixed by the regulations. Then in section 30, I believe, it says that the government can fix the amount of fees for the purpose of section 21. What criteria are to be applied in terms of fixing those amounts? There are none. That's a decision left to a later date, but it's a very important decision.

Mr Gary Wilson: In fact, there are fees being charged now, and it's the kind of fees that are in existence now that that's referring to. In any case, the accountability is strictly there. The government has control, through the regulations, over the fees that are assigned.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, do you have more?

Mr Sutherland: I want to come back to the point that while I think it's fair for accountability questions to be raised, I don't believe this is the specific section. We're dealing with the amendment put forward by Mr Ramsay, and I hope we would wait until we get to those accountability sections.

The Chair: Thank you, sir, and I would never muzzle your right to voice your opinion. Go ahead, Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Just one last comment to sum this up, and then one question to the parliamentary assistant: In my amendment deleting "design" and "provide"—we've had this debate—I notice, if you look at the other objects, every other function of OTAB mentioned in the first paragraph, "promote, support, fund, coordinate, evaluate" is

further elaborated in the objects of 4(1); they tally up to 18, actually, and paragraph 18 is quite large, up to five parts there. But nowhere else does it talk about "design" and "provide." I think "design" is mentioned, but "provide"? I'm just wondering why there's not more full description.

In your answers to me, you've said, "We've got to make sure that an information base is developed," and paragraph 3 talks to that. Paragraph 2 is about research and development, which you've talked about, and that's fine. Paragraph 4 is advice to government. Then we get what you've talked about in 5, the lives of workers. Then 6 is talking about "the development and promotion of common standards."

So all those answers you gave me are all outlined as other objects of OTAB, they're all fleshed out there, but nowhere else do you flesh out the provision of programs. It talks about access and equity, which of course we all agree with; about establishing links with all the labour force partners; "to identify and seek to eliminate systemic and other discriminatory barriers," and of course we all agree with that. Everything else is spelled out. There has been lots of space provided in the bill to spell out all the objects of the bill, but nowhere else do you talk about "provide." You've really got an open-ended provision there that I feel would allow a board to start to become a provider of programs, and I just don't think that should be the intent of this bill.

1500

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm not sure you have made the case that these are elaborators; that that was the purpose of the further objects, to elaborate on the first paragraph. After all, as I pointed out, part of the provision of services comes with collating and distributing research information, which is mentioned in paragraph 2. In paragraph 12, it talks about the delivery of services. But as I said, I don't think there's a tight one-to-one relationship among those verbs in the first paragraph of the objects and the rest of them. They're there because those are two of the aspects that OTAB will have, among the other ones that are listed in paragraph 1.

The Chair: All in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please indicate. Opposed? The motion is defeated.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chairman, continuing on the objects section of the bill, I move that paragraph 5 of subsection 4(1) of the bill be amended by striking out "and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers" in the last two lines.

This is just to be consistent with my amendment moved this morning in the purposes section of the bill. You're almost asking the impossible of OTAB, when you obviously want, because of the global competition that's out there, to lead to the enhancement of skill levels, and certainly OTAB can do that; it can lead to the enhancement of productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness.

But it's not necessarily so that all of that will contribute, as we hope it would, to the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers. Again, it's such wishful thinking written into law. I just wonder if anybody could take OTAB to court because he or she went to all the

courses and passed the courses but it didn't lead to the improvement of his or her life. That's what we all wish, but I think that sort of language needs to be in the preamble. Of course, in the end, that's what we would hope the results to be, but unless those newly acquired skills are applied in the workplace, then there is going to be no real improvement of the lives of workers or potential workers. That's all I want to say about that.

Mr Gary Wilson: As Mr Ramsay mentioned, we've been over this ground before. I think our point has been that there's definitely a strong aspect to this. The court these workers you referred to would appeal to would be the court of public accountability, that OTAB won't be doing its job unless the lives of workers and potential workers are improved. Obviously, people who haven't got jobs get jobs through better training programs, and that is an improvement. Having better training so they can do their jobs better, the productivity that would arise from that and the ability to change jobs, to get a higher income from new jobs they qualify for because of training—that's an improvement. We just see that the proper functioning of OTAB will lead to the improvement in the lives of workers.

Mr Ramsay: Well, Mr Wilson, in your answer you've mentioned that the training programs should lead to job creation. I'm just sorry that you voted against a previous amendment I moved that that's what I wanted OTAB to promote: both the generation of wealth and the creation of jobs.

Anyway, I have nothing more to say on this. I certainly want to get on to the amendments of my colleague in the Tory party, Ms Cunningham, and further ones this afternoon.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Just to say that we're in support. We've had this debate throughout the hearings to this point, so Mr Ramsay knows we're going to be supporting this.

The Chair: All those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please indicate. Those opposed? Mr Ramsay's motion is defeated.

Ms Cunningham, please. You have an amendment dealing with paragraphs 5, 6, 13, 15 and 16.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes. Mr Chairman, because of what happened earlier today, which probably wasn't strategically as well done as we could have done, we've separated them as the Liberals did in their former two. If you can treat them separately—we actually had them printed separately for the clerk.

The Chair: Ms Cunningham moves that paragraph 5 of subsection 4(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"5. To seek to ensure that publicly funded labour force development programs and services, in the context of the competitive Canadian and global economies and in the context of a fair and just society, lead to the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness and the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals."

Do you so move?

Mrs Cunningham: I do.

The Chair: Thank you.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you, Mr Chairman. You read so well; more quickly than I do, is the point.

The amendment with regard to paragraph 5, by adding the phrase "helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals" immediately after "improve the lives of workers and potential workers" is another attempt to clarify and to respond to some of the concerns that were raised during the public hearings. This change parallels the change in the purpose section of the bill, which we had hoped to get your support for, and I'm sure others did, but it was definitely recommended by the OTAB business steering committee. This is a recommendation from the OTAB business steering committee, and I would be most interested in hearing anybody's reasons for supporting or otherwise.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said this morning in response to the earlier amendment, I find that this restricts the scope of the paragraph, in particular "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers," by qualifying it in this way that I find to be overly subjective. And it raises the question of what "realistic personal development" involves; I think it actually hinders the development of programs if those kinds of decisions have to be met before they're undertaken. To me, the workers themselves will know when their lives are being improved or not. I think that's the important criterion here, and the bill allows for it; this paragraph in particular allows for it.

Mr Sutherland: If I could just pick up on that, I think some people may interpret—I'm sure Ms Cunningham and her staff didn't mean it this way—the added lines as maybe a bit paternalistic. I will describe it this way: Take the example of a disabled person, and let's say she needs some accommodation in the workplace. Someone may interpret it as, "It's not realistic that that accommodation should occur." You've got a sense here of them asking, what are they capable of doing? What if they're capable of doing it with the accommodation, but people aren't willing to make that accommodation? Is the amendment somewhat limiting? That would be my concern with how it's worded.

1510

Mrs Witmer: I'm really concerned about the inclusion of the statement as it is: "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers." I believe it's extremely important that we either eliminate that section or add, as we have suggested here, "by helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals."

To say, as the government has said in Bill 96, simply "the improvement of the lives" is extremely vague. What is the interpretation? I'm sure the interpretation could be many things to many people. I think it's very unrealistic to expect that this bill is going to improve the lives of workers and potential workers. What exactly do you mean? Is it going to give them a shorter workweek? Is it going to give them a higher-paying job? Is it going to give them access

to gambling casinos? I'm not sure. What is the interpretation of "improving the lives of workers and potential workers"?

That's why I say either get rid of the clause, as the Liberals have suggested, or add, as we have suggested, to focus on what it is we're talking about; that is, to allow workers to identify for themselves—and that's extremely important. It's something I do personally myself: What type of personal development am I looking for? What is realistic, given my abilities, my background, my skills, my experience? What are my economic goals?

I think we need to force people to take some responsibility for themselves in identifying that. You can't expect that OTAB is going to improve your life; it's unrealistic. It's going to give people access to training programs and services, but there is absolutely no guarantee that there will be improvement of their lives. In fact, we don't even know what that means. As I've said, does it mean you have access to gambling casinos, or what have you? It's totally unrealistic, and I think we need to be encouraging workers to focus on what it is they're looking for in the area of personal development and what their economic goals are.

Mrs Cunningham: Certainly my colleague has stated it well, and it's not the first time we've had the debate. In looking at the objects of the legislation, we did have some choices here as to what we would offer amendments to. I think most of you remember the debate around the first part of the objects, that many people said that whatever we do in the area of training programs, we should be calling them training programs. We put in "labour force development programs," because we thought that terminology was something the government was rather married to, but we would have preferred "training programs." We didn't put that in. We also had the complaint that the training programs ought to be needs-driven. We considered putting an amendment for "needs-driven," but we decided not to do that. We lived with what one might say is a very open-ended object with regard to promoting and supporting and funding these labour force development programs. Most people don't know what we mean by that, but we thought, "Well, this is the language of this government, and as long as everybody knows this bill is about training, we'll leave it alone."

With regard to the second part of the objects—because we could have changed all of them—again, we wanted to be responsible and reasonable in our request for amendments. There was a lot of concern around carrying out research and development with respect to all aspects of labour force development: That's a pretty big piece. However, it is inclusive as opposed to exclusive. We were asked to identify what the word "all" meant. If you want to go around picking on words, I certainly could go through each and every one of these, because we spent hours trying to come up with the most responsible amendments.

I think we're being very consistent. I could say the same with regard to paragraph 5, which is what we're trying to amend right now. But if we take a look at the input, there was a real concern about how lives of workers and potential workers would be improved. It was left open for discussion: We didn't want to raise everybody's expectations by saying "ensuring jobs," because we certainly

didn't think the end result was to ensure jobs. We think the result of good training programs is to increase jobs, because then people get excited about the workforce and they want to come to Ontario and make more business opportunities available.

But on this one, I can't believe the government wouldn't want us to be specific. On the others, we knew you wouldn't, but on this one, we just thought it would fall into place. Saying to these workers and potential workers specifically that, "We want to help you identify and pursue your realistic personal development," isn't something I would normally want to put in, believe me, because I don't think the public is prepared to spend all these dollars looking at realistic personal development. We know that many people will not have employment but still want to be trained and retrained for jobs, whether they're being paid or whether they be qualified to speak English as a second language more fluently and articulately or whether we train them for jobs where they're simply volunteering. These are the realities of the marketplace today. We thought this was important to put this in: "It's okay to be trained, it's important that you be retrained for these reasons."

And economic goals are for a very healthy society. People who may feel like they're not contributing because they don't have paid jobs may in fact be doing other things. I'm now talking about homemakers who are taking care of other people's children; I'm talking about volunteers who are working in our hospitals and our schools. All of those things were presented to us in a very creative way.

That is why we have added "helping them identify and pursue realistic personal development and economic goals" to "the improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers," because we felt there was more to it, even though, in the purpose section, it's to create jobs. In the objects section, it is to improve the quality of life. We thought we could expand upon it in that way, and I certainly think you should be giving this serious thought.

Mr Gary Wilson: Judging by our comments both this morning and now, I think they should reflect the serious thought we have given it and come back to the fact that this actually complicates the issue of how workers' lives would be improved through training. Ms Witmer made the case most strongly by saying that she didn't want anybody telling her what training would best suit her, that she wanted to make those decisions herself. I think that's the surest guide to it, that if you think you need the help, then you get it.

Mrs Witmer: I don't believe I made that comment.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's what I thought you were saying.

Mrs Witmer: No.

Mr Gary Wilson: I thought you said you didn't want people telling you to do that. In any case, the idea is that we expect that workers, in consultation with the other labour market partners, will know the kinds of training that are needed and will participate in making sure those kinds of programs are there. In the long run, that will lead to improving their lives through having the skills they need

both to do their job more productively and to transfer to other jobs.

Mrs Cunningham: My final comment: I think Mr Wilson has convinced us in his comments that we are correct. The workers and potential workers of today are totally confused with regard to the needs of the future. I think I made that clear this morning with the presentation I made in terms of a lot of the economic development training and quality of life sessions that are going on. It's very confusing for most of us.

So we said "by helping them identify and pursue realistic, personal development and economic goals." I think that is the role of this OTAB training board. I think they will have the information. It's their responsibility to identify training needs, and we're saying they will help people in this regard; we're putting it in. I really have no understanding of why the government won't admit it. That's fine. At least we've given it a go, and we'll be proud to tell the public we've done that.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, I'd like to move a five-minute recess.

The Chair: What you may want to do, in the event that a vote is called—a vote hasn't been called yet. Are you anticipating a vote?

Mr Sutherland: No, I'd just like to have a five-minute recess. Can I not ask that?

The Chair: Sure you can. I'll grant a five-minute recess.

The committee recessed at 1521 and resumed at 1542.

The Chair: We're ready to resume.

All in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Ms Cunningham, please.

Mrs Cunningham: Well, after that break, maybe people will feel a little more spirited, as opposed to me-spirited, about the responses. Who knows what could have happened? I thought the member for Oxford was asking for a break because he was going to consider something, but I don't think he did that. Maybe he'll ask for another break and consider something next time.

I would like to read into the record an amendment with regard to paragraph 4(1)6. I'm going to add two simple words that I think send a message to the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board with regard to the objects of the legislation. We're changing paragraph 6 to say:

"To participate in the development and promotion of common standards in occupational training throughout Canada, so as to enhance labour force mobility by making skills more portable."

We just thought we'd be very specific, that we do expect to be part of a Canadian training strategy. We've mentioned it in paragraph 5 with regard to the competitive Canadian and global economy, and we think "to ensure that publicly funded labour force development programs and services, in the context of the competitive Canadian and global economy" is very important, but we also think "the promotion of common standards of occupational training throughout Canada" is important. We think they go

together and we just wanted to make it very clear, unless, of course, there's an agenda that I do not understand.

So two words inserted after "occupational training." I'd appreciate anybody's comments with regard to this and of course their support.

Mr Gary Wilson: I appreciate your concern for the national picture, Ms Cunningham, but our way of looking at this is that the legislation as it stands now includes Canadian standards, but by actually putting it into the legislation it restricts it to only those standards that are in fact Canadian and wouldn't be those that are involved among three provinces or even across sectoral boundaries, say. There would be standards set up in a province that applied to a sector, but not a sector that wasn't involved in any other province in Canada; by saying it had to apply to all Canadian jurisdictions, it just wouldn't be applicable. By not mentioning any, it includes everything, but by mentioning Canada, it does restrict it to Canada.

Mrs Cunningham: As opposed to?

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, to three provinces, for example.

Mrs Cunningham: Three provinces?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, because it's not Canadian. There are seven provinces and the territories left out of that. Therefore, that wouldn't apply, because the standard is not for Canada. Some of the standards we have in mind would be just in the Ontario context. It's to give it more scope.

Mrs Witmer: Mr Wilson, I would suggest that your argument is weak and I find it difficult to comprehend. We're simply asking for a little more precision as opposed to the vagueness that is indicated here in the objects. We're simply asking "To participate in the development and promotion of common standards and occupational training throughout Canada." Whether you want to have three provinces involved or 10 provinces and two territories or three territories, it really doesn't matter. What we're talking about are some common standards throughout this country, because, as we know, OTAB is in partnership with the federal government in this whole initiative of training. We're suggesting that this change in the legislation will ensure that there is some development of national standards, provincial standards. Also, I think it's going to allow for the individuals who access training to have some job mobility, because if they move to a different province the standards will be similar.

I think we need to be encouraging the development of some common standards throughout this country. The time for isolationism is past. We're looking for interprovincial barriers to come down, and in the same way, I think we need to be looking at development of national standards. I think it will enhance job opportunities for all Canadians: Regardless of where you receive your training, you will be able to access jobs in other parts of the country, if the jobs that meet your skill requirements are available there. I think we're going to make it much easier for our employees to access jobs, and I would encourage you to include "throughout Canada" in the amendment.

Mr Gary Wilson: I would just like to say that we are in complete agreement on the reasons for the common standards, and we achieve that by not limiting it to "throughout Canada."

Mrs Cunningham: I would note to my colleagues that Ms Witmer's mike isn't working and neither is mine; some days you guys will do anything to keep us quiet. But my friend Mr McGuinty has agreed to share his microphone with me.

I really have to say that this has to be the rhetoric of a socialist government, this one. A socialist government is usually selective to its ideology, and I would have thought this one would really suit it well. But they are totally inconsistent with the stand they took during the constitutional debate: that the federal government approved of all the barriers from province to province when it came to training and trade, and why didn't it remove the barriers during the constitutional debates, and wasn't that an amendment that should have been considered? That was certainly the position of this socialist government.

Now they've got an absolute chance to include something that I wouldn't have even noticed if it had not been for the Mississauga Board of Trade bringing it to our attention. Even more importantly, their own Ontario Institute for Studies in Education raised this as an oversight, that one has to be consistent from 5 to 6. The need for OTAB to participate in the development of national standards to ensure job mobility across Canada was recommended by Stephen Lawton, professor and chair of the department of educational administration at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

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Because we thought we should go through these briefs with a fine-tooth comb and at least take the expensive advice we get from OISE from time to time where it seemed like a simple, consistent thing to do, we did it. Now we're actually hearing from the government that it doesn't want to put "throughout Canada" in there, because it might in fact leave one with the impression that three other provinces could get together and exclude us from their training strategies. Or would we exclude them from our training strategies? I don't understand the point that was being made at. All I know is that Ontario has an opportunity to be visionary and to set the tone. With due respect to your comments, I think this is an opportunity to participate in the development of national standards by saying that they are important.

I commend the Mississauga Board of Trade for adding "throughout Canada" to paragraph 6. This change puts in legislation a requirement for the Ontario government to participate with the federal government and the other provinces in the development of any future national standards for training.

Do you know who really would like to see this? The young people. At the same time as we're talking about OTAB, we're talking about the need for mobility, for credits transferring from college to college, from university to university, from colleges to universities within our own province and from province to province. You should know

that credits even from certain universities outside of Canada are accepted at some of our universities, and some standards are accepted by our professions.

We're not even recognizing in our own legislation our responsibility as a province to set the tone. I can hardly wait to read the Hansards and try to figure out what the government is trying to shove down my throat on this one. Here's your great opportunity to put your money where your mouth is and be consistent with your own position with regard to the constitutional debate in terms of what you say about barriers, and to support your own OISE, which does research for the government.

Mr Sutherland: Well, talk about rhetoric. Ms Cunningham, you're saying we need to add "throughout Canada" here on the recommendation of the board of trade. That's fine. Personally, I don't think it makes a difference. As a matter of fact, I consider putting "throughout Canada" limiting, because there are some cases where international standards should apply, and we wouldn't want to be accused of being isolationist or anything like that by putting in something that would limit that.

Mrs Cunningham: Then I would suggest you remove "Canadian" in paragraph 5.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, if you let other people interrupt you, they will. They won't interrupt you unless you want them to.

Mr Sutherland: What I'm saying is that the way it's worded now allows for it throughout Ontario, allows for it throughout Canada, allows for it on an international basis. I don't think you need to change the wording. It's allowed by what's there now.

Mrs Cunningham: I take exception to that observation. We're talking about training standards right now, and I think it is our responsibility to develop training standards in Ontario. It would be even more our responsibility to develop training standards that are consistent throughout Canada. But I don't think it is our responsibility to worry about standards in other parts of the world. They can have their own. I've got enough problems getting training standards here in Ontario.

Mr Sutherland: It's not limiting.

Mrs Cunningham: All we're trying to do is be consistent in the legislation itself. If the programs and services are being developed "in the context of a competitive Canadian and global economy," certainly it's our responsibility to have Ontario standards that are consistent with Canadian standards and to promote them so that we can be competitive in a global economy. That's all I'm saying. I can't see the arguments against it. I don't think anybody else can.

And by the way, don't be selective in your quote. If you don't like the Mississauga Board of Trade, do you also dislike the views of Stephen Lawton from OISE with his study?

Mr Sutherland: I'm saying the current wording allows it.

The Chair: All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Opposed?

Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham: All right. We're making great progress. For the record, it's almost 4 o'clock on the second day of hearings, and the government so far has tabled one amendment.

Paragraph 13 under subsection 4(1) we would amend to read as follows, and all we're doing is adding the word "appropriate":

"13. To seek to ensure that labour force development programs and services are appropriate and of high quality and achieve the best results and the best returns on investment, through the use of a variety of methods that are fully and effectively evaluated in all respects, including cost-effectiveness."

This change parallels the change we had hoped would be part of the purpose section of the bill, but as it wasn't received by the government as being helpful, we are now trying to put it in the objects section of the bill. It's recommended by the OTAB business steering committee. I have already advised the government members that they never did feel when they left their consultations that the government wouldn't be making changes as a result of public hearings. I certainly had an opportunity over lunchtime to talk to members of the business steering committee in that regard, and also members of the education steering committee. They have no problem in putting that on the record again. Perhaps we'll now hear about how the government feels about it being part of the objects.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said in the earlier discussion on the purpose clause, we believe the appropriateness of labour force development programs and services is already addressed in other parts of the legislation, for instance, clause 1(b) and paragraph 4(1)5, where it's stated that some of the goals of labour force development programs and services are "the enhancement of skill levels, productivity, quality, innovation and timeliness."

But I think it's also stated with a great deal of precision and economy in paragraph 4(1)12, where it talks of one of the objects of OTAB: "To seek to ensure that labour force development programs and services are designed, delivered and evaluated in light of the needs and priorities of all Ontario's employers, workers and potential workers." That clearly states that the programs and services that are designed, delivered and evaluated will be appropriate, because they are there to serve the needs of the labour market partners, and they're the ones who are going to determine the appropriateness of the programs they are deliberating on and coming up with.

Finally, you raise the question of, if you do put that in the legislation, whether that wouldn't be a hindrance in determining the programs simply by defining what is appropriate. Through what's in the legislation, that will be defined in practice, so I don't find it helps at all to add that term.

1600

Mrs Witmer: In attempting to add here the term "appropriate," it's similar to what we attempted to do in the purpose clause, where we also asked that the word "appropriate" be added.

What we want to make absolutely certain here is that we have training programs that are not simply being conducted or made available to people for the sake of training. We need to somehow have determined what type of training is required to access jobs, what type of training is required in order that wealth can be created in this province, in order that we can improve the quality of life? What is it that we need in order to encourage investment to come into this province? What type of skills do our employees need? When someone from Germany or Japan or what have you is looking to invest and start a new business or a new industry here, do we have the skilled employees who are going to meet their needs?

I think we need to be doing a bit of research. We need to be very careful in the type of programs we make available to individuals. That's why we need to specify that they be appropriate. We need to ensure that any training we provide in this province, through OTAB or otherwise, is going to lead to employability, the ability of that individual to get a job and allow him to actively participate in our society; as a result, the quality of his life is also going to be improved, as is the quality of life of others who are going to be impacted by the fact that they have a job. I think the term "appropriate" certainly would enhance that particular phrase.

Mrs Cunningham: If the members of the committee would take a look at the work that was done by legislative research on the input, they will notice that paragraph 4(1)13 was of great concern and that we had many choices with regard to how we could deal with these concerns. We actually spent a lot of time looking at the recommendations we received. At this point in time, I'd like to thank legislative research; they certainly made our job easier. It's really very helpful, when you're trying to consider a tremendous amount of input from the public, to have this work done for you. We certainly used it as a guide.

It wasn't lightly that we put forth this recommendation. On paragraph 13 alone, there were about 19 different recommendations, specific ones. My notes on this particular section tell me there were 52 other briefs that didn't offer specific amendments but which raised this particular section as a concern. Although it doesn't appear to be a very large amendment and we didn't say a lot about it, it was with some serious thought that we put forth this word. We at least thought that some of the concerns would be met and that we would have given the public some recognition for the work it did. I just wanted to put that on the record so the government would know that, although it's just one word, a lot of thought went into meeting the concerns of the public in that regard. Once again, we will be testing the value of public input.

Mr Gary Wilson: In the final analysis, the public is going to be interested in whether OTAB does the job we're setting it out to do. We believe, as I pointed out, that this term is covered in aspects of the bill already. But I agree with Mrs Cunningham that what the public wants to know is how well the OTAB will do its job.

Mrs Cunningham: My only response to that is that I would hope the government at the end of these hearings

would have the confidence of the partners we're going to be relying on to get the work done. It would be even more interesting to see, as a result of these hearings, whether or not the labour market partners in communities are interested in sitting on local training boards. If what we've witnessed yesterday and today is an indication of the response to public input, I can tell you that I'm losing my confidence by the hour as to whether this will move forward.

I certainly listened to those complaints in London on the weekend and defended the process. I'm feeling a bit silly about it right now, to tell you the truth, especially with my friend and member for Oxford sitting over there, who gave great hope to the youth of this province that he would come down and do things in a different way, and that hasn't happened.

But the committee hearings aren't over. To exercise our responsibility as elected representatives, we still have a chance to prove ourselves tomorrow afternoon and all day Thursday. The very important deliberations are yet to come, and there'll be more starting tomorrow afternoon. I haven't lost hope yet, but that's because I've been known to hang in there to the very end and beyond. But I can hardly wait.

There's no point in telling me that the public thought this was great. Why would they come down and give us the best advice they could? But one amendment so far. I'm sure Mr Mills is listening very carefully. He has to go and defend this government next time out. I have my doubts about whether, at this point, he would bother to do that. He might, but I'm sure that is going through his mind. I met with his colleague and friend Mr Cureatz yesterday—

Mr Mills: Oh, dear.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I should say to Mr Mills that he was quite complimentary, and I think they're probably good friends. Also, I think he has given Mr Mills some good advice.

I have no reason to think this, except that I've watched Mr Mills in the House and we've certainly had conversations from time to time. My observation is that there are certain members of the government right now who are feeling very uncomfortable about public hearings that cost—I'll put this in the record. Can you believe this? Do you want to guess? These public hearings so far have cost more than \$53,000. I don't know why I bother to come down here and do this work. This is just a joke.

However, would you like to vote on that last amendment? I'd be happy to see the vote.

Mr Mills: Before we vote, Mr Chair, I'd just like for the record to say that indeed Samuel Cureatz and I are good friends and have been since my election.

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you, Mr Mills. I'm sure he'll appreciate your support.

The Chair: All in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham: Bunch of puppets. Shame on you.

Mr Sutherland: Look at the puppets over there.

The Chair: Mr Ramsay, please.

Mr Ramsay: I move that paragraphs 15 and 16 of subsection 4(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"15. To make effective use of all of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources."

Group after group came before us, and I really agree with this. It's interesting and obviously very timely that representatives of one of the big teachers' unions happens to be here for this; I think it's good that Mr French hear this at first hand.

If OTAB is really to be client-driven, as I think the government intends, because it's made the two big players in this business and labour—and that's right; that's how it should be. It's got to be driven by the customers and by the clients here, so this is right. If it's to be that and be responsive to the customer, then it can't be all things to all people. It can't be social legislation, and it's not; it's economic legislation. And we can't prejudice the board as to where it should be deriving its training programs from. The board has to be free to access the very best training programs in Ontario, wherever they may be.

In the legislation, paragraph 4(1)15 basically states—and I've just added "all" for a little more emphasis—"To make effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources." I think that's fine. But I don't know why we've had to add, in paragraph 16, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems."

1610

OTAB's not going to be a sheltered workshop for education in Ontario. It's to get everybody, all the players, together; all the customers together; the trainers need to be there, and the educators. Everybody who are partners in providing training and who need training need to work together, so the government's right in bringing this together, but there should be no prejudice towards the publicly funded education system.

We have a fine publicly funded education system in Ontario, maybe one of the best in the world, but you should not be giving direction to a new agency that says, "You must give preference," and that's what you're doing by adding that in there. I don't know why you move from 15, which I think was right—I've added "all of" just to make the emphasis, to make sure that OTAB really avails itself of all the resources that are out there. There should be no prejudices built into the bill. If you want this new entity, OTAB, to function properly, you must not hamper it in any way; you must not shackle it and give it any specific direction as to where it should be giving preference for the access of courses.

Of course we all support the publicly funded education system of Ontario. We're all part of the public sector here. We promote that; we all believe in a publicly funded education system, of course. But don't tell OTAB that it's got to ensure the strength of the system. The publicly funded system is going to have to compete out there. Don't make it a cripple by saying, "You've got special privileges," because that's what you're going to do. You're going to cripple the publicly funded education system if you give it preference.

If you want a world-class education system, make sure it competes out there. God knows they've got the resources to compete. They've already got the high schools, they've got the community colleges and the universities that we've all contributed to, so they've got a tremendous advantage, and that's great, but let them compete with everybody else out there so we make sure that the workers of Ontario are well served and are being given and provided the very best programs that are available. If it's a school board in a certain community that's providing the best programs, that's great; that's where OTAB should be going. If it's a community college, that's great; that's where OTAB should be going. If some course is provided better by a private trainer, then great, that's where it should go; the private trainer should provide the course so that our workers in Ontario have the very best. That's what we want; we want to seek excellence.

You won't make the publicly funded education system excellent if you give it a free ride, because that's what's been the trouble with the publicly funded system: There hasn't been accountability put there. Your minister today is talking—and I agree with him—about accountability. This is great; I support him on that. We need to find mechanisms of accountability. That's important. Teachers have to be made accountable. We haven't done that. We spend more on the publicly funded education system than any other jurisdiction in the world, and it's a failure. We've got to smarten it up. Your minister's starting to smarten it up.

We've got to do that, and we're going to have to start right here and not give them a free ride. You're giving them a cushion here. That's wrong, because we won't have a world-class publicly funded education system if you give it a free ride. It's got to be challenged; it's got to produce; it's got to be done in partnership with the clients there, the parents and the children. And it's got to make sure that it provides the workers—because our school boards are providing adult education, which is great—what our workers need.

OTAB, the local boards especially, the LTABs, will be able to make those decisions in the community of what's needed. The school boards will probably be the most responsive, because they've got the resources to provide those courses. Under OTAB's direction, they probably are going to be the ones who can provide a lot of the courses. But don't give them preference, or they'll become fat and lazy if you do that, and we don't need anybody in this society today in the public sector being fat and lazy. We're all going to have to get out there, roll up our sleeves and work harder and work smarter. So don't give them preference; I just feel so strongly about that. You give them equal opportunity.

As I say, I think they have more than equal opportunity because they've got a lot of resources that we as taxpayers already put in there and will continue to make sure we fund them properly. It's not OTAB's job to make sure we have a strong publicly funded education system. It's us as legislators, the Ministry of Education, it's the public sector that's to make sure we've got a very strong publicly funded education system. It's not the job of OTAB. So please, let's take it out of there and let's free OTAB to

avail itself of all the resources that are out there so the very best courses can be provided for the workers of Ontario.

Mrs Witmer: I have a question for Mr Wilson. In paragraph 16, when you talk about, "To seek to ensure...the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems," what are you talking about? What is your definition of "Ontario's publicly funded education system"?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think that's fairly well defined: There is the whole structure of the elementary, secondary, and then post-secondary: colleges and universities.

Mrs Witmer: So that's what you're referring to when you talk about the publicly funded education system? Okay. Then in speaking to the motion we have before us, which I certainly could support, I believe it's absolutely essential that in setting up OTAB, we need to use and support all of Ontario's training resources that are available to us at the present time. Obviously, we need to look for others as well.

I think there have been some excellent programs made available. Whether it's being done by the publicly funded educational and training resources or whether it's being done by the private sector trainers, they have been a very important component of Ontario's training infrastructure, and I think we have to make sure we continue to treat all of these resources equally. They are valuable resources. We need to make sure that none of those resources are excluded, and we need to make absolutely sure that not only are the school boards accessed, but the other areas as well.

I can assure you that school boards can compete. I've certainly seen that in my own community. The two school boards in Waterloo offer outstanding training and educational programs to people in our community which do allow them to access jobs.

I feel confident that if we were to condense 15 and 16 and put, as has been stated here by Mr Ramsay, "To make effective use of all of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources," that we will have at our disposal all of the resources necessary to ensure that we do get our training on a sound footing.

Mr Offer: I'd like to speak in support of this amendment. In terms of an opening comment, I would like to remind members of the committee that this issue was one of those issues that was brought forward time and again to the committee. It was an issue we heard from a great many individuals very concerned with how paragraphs 15 and 16 would be interpreted.

I think we all know that when a word or words are put in legislation, they are put in legislation for some effect, for some meaning. They are not there in a frivolous fashion; rather, they are assumed to have been thoughtfully decided and inserted in legislation.

1620

We see that 15 reads, "To make effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources," and many people said yes, that is what one of the objects of OTAB should be. There were countless examples as to how that in fact has taken place. We heard from the public boards, we heard from the private sector, we heard countless examples in many communities of how effective use

was being made of our diverse educational and training resources, that there were people, groups and associations working together, not one over the other, not one in priority with another, but working together.

We then had real concerns raised, not over paragraph 15 but over paragraph 16, which says, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems." The concerns brought forward were that words are put in legislative form not for a frivolous purpose; they are put there for meaning, they are put there for effect, they are put there for intent, and we must take a look at what those words mean. No matter how you cut it, there was a concern by the private trainers that this was used to separate systems, to attach a priority, that that is why they are there. They are not there for a flowery, frivolous purpose. They are there for a reason. We can switch it around: If that is not the reason, then there is no need for those words, because 15 says exactly what is being done.

The government is left in a dilemma. They say, to those who said that there is the basis for priority placed when one inserts paragraph 16, that is not going to be the case, that there is not a priority, that that is not the effect, the meaning, the intent of paragraph 16. But we look at 16, so the response to the government is, if that is not the intent, if that is not what the effect of 16 should be, if that is not the meaning, then surely you would have no problem in taking 16 out, and let us work in terms of 15: "the effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources."

If you do not accept that argument, then you must accept that there is some meaning to 16, some meaning such as has been brought forward by the many presenters who have said this is something that is going to cause a difference, that is going to attach a priority. If it is not, then change the words. If it is only to state that you wish to make certain that the educational and training resources of the province are effectively used, then you take 16 out and you allow what has happened in this province: the vast and diverse training and educational resources of this province to continue to operate as they have and to grow together, without attaching a priority.

The government has got a dilemma here, a dilemma which it itself has caused.

I had occasion to re-read the presentation brought forward by the school boards sector working group, and it was interesting what was said: "We do support in principle the establishment of something like the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board, because we recognize the need for Ontario to coordinate its program of education, training and retraining in order to assist the labour force to adjust in a fast-changing economy." Listen to what they said: "We recognize that all of our training and educational resources must be efficiently utilized."

Is that not the essence of the amendment put forward by Mr Ramsay? That is what we want to address, that is what we want to accomplish. Paragraph 16 takes away from 15. It cannot be argued any other way. I will be listening to Mr Sutherland: I would expect that you will try to show how paragraph 16 does not take away from 15,

but as you do that, you must make certain to acknowledge that words are put in legislation for purpose, for effect and for intent. You must be able to show, because this is a matter that has been brought forward by many people during our hearings, why paragraph 16 does not take away from paragraph 15, and if it doesn't, then to show why paragraph 16 is in fact needed. That is the essence of the responsibility that the members of the government have to meet. You have not been able to do it during the public hearings, and I think we have to recognize that this is an incredibly important matter, not only to the public system but also to the private trainers in the province.

As we move into the further legislation, I know my colleague has already tabled and will be putting forward another amendment which talks about who's going to be on the board and that there will be five directors representing educators and trainers, and we'll be discussing that. That folds in with an effective reading of paragraph 15. This is an important matter. It is an issue that has been brought forward every day of these hearings. It is an issue which the government has to meet. It is an issue where you do not want the objects of the OTAB to take away, by attaching a priority on what is an evolving training and educational resource system in this province of a public and private nature.

If that is your position, then you must categorically state that. And if it is your position, then you must substantiate the need for 16, because those who are in the training sector say that 16 takes away from 15. I'll be listening, and I hope members of the government will take a look and listen and remember what was said during the public hearings and support the amendment which is so closely felt by many experts of the public and private sector in this province.

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Offer talks about how 16 takes away from 15. We see it as that 16 adds to 15 in that it is complementary. Certainly what we heard in the public hearings—not only from the representatives of the public educational system, but certainly from them—was the advancement or the improvement or the responsiveness of the public educational system to the training needs that are being identified now, its ability to meet the training needs that are being identified and that OTAB certainly will be involved in.

I think what we want to single out here is the complementary nature of 15 and 16: that 15 recognizes the diverse educational and training resources of Ontario and how they will be used by OTAB, and 16 highlights the public educational system that we've developed in this province over a number of years, that we're justifiably proud of, and recognize that it can develop to meet the new needs that are arising in the province.

Again, paragraphs 15 and 16 are complementary. They cover all aspects of the training structure in Ontario and how OTAB will have access to them. But even in writing, though, as Mr Offer has highlighted, the words in it are very important. In the suggested amendment, we find "all of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources," and "all of" is ambiguous in the sense that it implies that, regardless of what training program is out there, OTAB

must use it simply because it could qualify as among the educational and training resources of the province. It specifies that "OTAB must make effective use of all of," without having the option of discriminating among the resources that will serve its needs. Just as you said, Mr Offer, what's in there is crucial, and by putting "all of," it does leave that open; in fact, it hinders OTAB from meeting of its mandate.

1630

Mr Ramsay: I have two questions: The first one comes right after the comments you just made on "all of," the addition I've made. In other words, it would be okay for OTAB to completely ignore, say, the private trainers or the community trainers if it so wished, institutions that have developed over the years, and very successfully so. What you're saying is that it's fine for OTAB to basically write them off if it so wished and ignore one sector of the training community.

Mr Gary Wilson: It's clearly not okay in our view. That's why we put it in legislation that it's "to make effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources."

Mr Ramsay: So really, you're finding it difficult to quibble about that, because that is just to make sure that everybody out there is considered.

I'd like to ask you the direct question, why is 16 there? Why is there the special mention of the publicly funded system, and not only the special mention but that somehow the mandate of OTAB, one of the objectives from that section, is to strengthen? Why should it be the object of OTAB to strengthen the publicly funded education system? First of all to strengthen it, period, and strengthen it over anybody else. Why should OTAB be doing this?

Mr Gary Wilson: As I mentioned, 16 is complementary with 15—

Mr Ramsay: No, it's different, so don't give me that. Paragraph 15 says "to make effective use of"; 16 goes further. It doesn't say "and then make effective use of the publicly funded system." It says, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength." That's a little different: It's more powerful, it's suggesting something here. It is saying that OTAB—this is one of its objects—is to ensure, within its operations, that its operations strengthen the publicly funded education system. You are discriminating here. You didn't say in 15 that we should be ensuring the strength of all of Ontario's resources. If you said each of those, then it would be in balance, and I could say, "Okay, when you decided to mention also the publicly funded system, that's not so bad."

But there's a real difference here. You say to make effective use of everybody out there, but now you're saying you're going to take one of the five trainers, not only to make effective use of but, this particular group, you're actually to strengthen. In other words, you're steering OTAB to put its money towards the publicly funded system over and above anything else. Remember, there are five different trainers out there. I'd just like to know why you've picked that out.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, I say that 16 is complementary to 15. Already 15 has mentioned the diversity of Ontario's training resources, and 16 does mention the need to seek to ensure the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems because of the investment that Ontario has made over the years in the publicly funded education system.

Mr Ramsay: What about the community trainers and the private trainers who have also invested a lot in their businesses? And they've done this successfully. Nobody's supporting them, but some people actually prefer to go to them; they seem to have a good track record on who they're training and their job placements.

Why not just say that we would try to strengthen all training resources in the province? It's not complementary, because there's a difference here. You are showing favour to one group over another. As I said before, what I'm worried about is that if the public system feels it's got a guarantee in this thing, that it's got basically the first call to these programs and it's going to be favoured over the other trainers, then we don't have competition any more, and how are we going to know that we'll be getting the best programs that our workers deserve?

Surely you would agree with me that we need to get the programs. In a lot of those areas, it's probably going to be from the publicly funded education system. I'm a product of the system; I'm a supporter of the system. I just don't understand why we favour, why we build these prejudices in. Let OTAB, all the partners there—and the education people are there, as my colleague said. I'm saying we want more educational people there: I'm not against them; I want three more added to the board. Some of those will represent publicly funded institutions, so they're going to be there and have a greater say, but why the prejudice against the others? You're favouring one over the other, and I just don't understand.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd agree with you that it would be favouritism if 15 weren't there, if it were only 16, but of course 15 is there. Another aspect you mentioned was the education and training representatives. There will be two representatives from that sector on the board, and they will have a reference group that will include all five components of the education and training sector, so their views will be well represented on the board. Taking these two objects in conjunction, there will be ample scope for all the various training resources in Ontario.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to ask Mr Wilson if he has gone through the consolidated summary of recommendations we have been presented with today that Anne Anderson, our research officer, has produced. Have you gone through these?

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm not sure I've gone through the exact one you're referring to, but I have one here—

Mr Ramsay: This would be the latest copy. She gave us an interim copy. I've counted them up: There are eight pages that speak to these two subsections. I was actually quite surprised. As a matter of fact, there are more pages devoted to recommendations on this than there are on all the purpose clauses. I'm quite surprised about how important

people think this is. It's not just private trainers, who obviously have a self-interest in this, but it's a lot of people from the business community, who don't want to be pinned down on where the provision of courses has to come from. What people are really looking for is freedom, either to choose or to compete. What it's about is freedom, and there are eight pages here.

Mr Gary Wilson: Will you just stipulate those pages you're talking about?

Mr Ramsay: Yes. The summary of recommendations is divided up by section and subsection; it starts on page 29. The first one says: "It is incumbent upon OTAB to ensure that no specific sector involved in training delivery is given preferential treatment."

Another: "OTAB must fully utilize every educational resource available in the province. Universities and colleges, apprenticeship and other workplace programs, and private vocational schools and private trainers all have an important role to play in ensuring that Ontario workers have the skills required to perform the jobs of the future."

Another: "Strengthen by recognizing all of the educational and training delivery networks."

It goes on and on and on. It's only really two groups, OSTF and OPSEU, that really say that nothing should be going to private trainers. It's only the two groups. Everybody else, even the YMCA, which is not really a private trainer but supported by the community, says: "OTAB cannot possibly support this system without a full commitment to institutional reform of our public education system." They're concerned that without that reform, you're saying OTAB's got to be favouring the public system and it's going to be a recipe for disaster.

I'm concerned that this, even though it looks fairly innocuous, could be a real key to the success or failure of OTAB. I'll give you an example in the United States of how, when government allows freedom—and in that one example, it would be a training issue—and when government decides to steer or provide a service, what the difference is. When the GIs came back as veterans after the Second World War, the Americans had two main problems: first of all, dealing with the health services of GIs, and they had to deal with the training issues of GIs, in that a new developing economy was now coming on the scene, and they had people whose schooling had been interrupted. They had to make sure they had the resources to provide health care for those people who were injured, and the resources for training.

On the training side they had the GI Bill, which is probably one of the most successful pieces of American legislation ever, that basically gave people a ticket to go and get the training they needed wherever they wanted to. Through that, the United States has developed a very strong publicly funded post-secondary education system, but good private trainers also, because people had the freedom to go where they wanted to.

On the medical side, they decided they were going to deliver the services. They built these veterans' hospitals, and they've been a complete failure. They decided they

would deliver a service and have a publicly funded service delivery system there.

It's interesting, the two contrasting methods they chose at the same time to solve two different problems.

I'm saying you should not be favouring any system. You shouldn't be favouring the private trainers. I'd be against that. I don't want you to favour anybody. I want to make sure that OTAB is free to choose, and a lot of that's going to be done on the local level. Whoever in the community is the best prepared or who already has the training available at the best cost—it should be tendered. Let people compete against each other, and it should be judged on price and effectiveness. That's all I'm saying. It should be cost-effective and it should be efficient. We've got to make sure we provide the best training for our workers. I just don't think you should be favouring one group over another, regardless of who it is.

1640

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, by putting both in here, we don't see ourselves as favouring either. You've listed some of the criteria that will be used to decide on the choice of programs, and it'll be up to the board of OTAB to make those decisions. But, again, it involves the labour market partners, and this is the kind of object they'll be working towards.

Mr Ramsay: If they're both the same, would you be open to an amendment that leaves 15 the way it is and then in 16 says, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of all of Ontario's educational training resources"? Then they would be equal.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said, though, they're complementary in the sense that 16 does specify the investment we've made over the years in the public education system, and this is what we are trying to highlight in object 16.

Mr Ramsay: The investment we've made in the publicly funded education system primarily has been geared towards the provision of elementary and secondary education; of course, the college and university system. That's a given, and it does its work today. The investment has paid off and is paying off.

I just don't know why, when we're now looking at consolidating all the operations of training, you need to give preference to that, especially when they have an advantage of being publicly funded. If anything, you might want to enhance the strength of the other trainers, who haven't had the advantage of public funding. But I'm not asking for that. I'm just saying that everybody should be treated equally. These people are already favoured, because they have received the largess of the public purse, which is fine. I believe in a publicly funded education system.

I just don't understand, if you think they're equal and complementary, why you wouldn't balance 15 and 16 to say that, "To seek to ensure, within the scope of OTAB's operations, the strength of all of Ontario's education and training resources." I don't understand the favouritism towards one or the other, especially when the public one has such an advantage anyway. It hardly needs favouritism.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I say, we see it as complementary, that we're not favouring one over the other by putting both of them in.

Ms Haecck: In listening to the debate over these two sections, I felt it was incumbent upon me to raise at least one concern that I've heard probably for the last five years from some of my constituents. Some of you may know that I sat on the board at Niagara College for a number of years, and some of my colleagues on that board have raised and still raise today that some of the federal initiatives, which they saw as removing training from their sector, they felt were having a negative or deleterious effect on the college system.

I think they would look at this kind of clause as recognizing the more than 25-year-long efforts of the college system—as well as recognizing the best elements of the private sector, because I do realize that, particularly within the construction trades, there's some very good training programs that are going on privately and are privately funded.

Between the two clauses, I think it recognizes some very positive elements that currently exist and that taxpayers in my riding, people like Bill Ford, would very much like to see continued.

Mr Offer: I wonder if the parliamentary assistant could explain what paragraph 16 is meant to accomplish.

Mr Gary Wilson: Taken in conjunction with 15, it has to do with the educational resources in the province. It's to highlight the investment we've made over the years in the publicly funded educational system, and to say that OTAB, within its scope—and that is relatively narrow with regard to the overall functioning of the publicly funded education system—is to use that resource as much as possible so that the investment we've made over the years will pay off and continue in the coming years. It's to say clearly that we have made that investment and we expect that the publicly funded education system will remain strong.

Mr Offer: On the basis of your response, the concern brought forward primarily by private trainers in this province would be well founded, in that OTAB must, in carrying out its purpose, seek to ensure the strength of the publicly funded system, and that after it does that, it can look to the private training sector.

Mr Gary Wilson: I don't think it is a question of order: that they would look to the publicly funded education system for programs that just aren't there. That's part of it, which I think your colleague has already mentioned. The bill itself refers to the diverse educational resources that are found in Ontario. It's not expected that the publicly funded system would have everything, just as it's not expected that the private system can deliver everything that the public can. They work in conjunction, and that's why 15 and 16 are there, to recognize that tie or that link between the two.

Mr Offer: But surely the parliamentary assistant must be aware that people will not be bound to read 15 and 16 together; that if it was the intent of the government that there be some counterbalance, there would be a combination of 15 and 16 as opposed to a separation.

I just go back to my first principle: Words put in legislation are there for a reason. We have to look at the impact of 15, the impact of 16 and, if we wish to, 17 and 18, or whichever one we wish to. We are looking at the impact of 15, which says "the effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources." I think that's pretty good. I think there are not many who would quarrel with that, that we have a diverse education and training resource in this province and that OTAB should seek to make effective use of that which we have and that which will evolve. But when you then have 16, you are saying that in doing so they'd better make certain they ensure the strength of the publicly funded education system.

We have to deal with this concern and this issue that has been brought forward, as Mr Ramsay indicated, by so many people in this province. It's a strange position the government has taken to the presentations made, because we hear from both the public and the private sector: "We like this idea, but we don't want to have any priority in training placed by the government. We all agree we'd better be good and we'd better be able to meet the challenges of the future and we'd better be effective. If we're not, then both the public and/or the private will suffer, if they can't meet the challenge." Everyone is saying: "Not only do we accept that; we want and are up to the challenge. Let's do it. Let's go forward."

And then they're saying, "But 16 doesn't do that. Paragraph 16 says that as OTAB is looking at effective use and the challenge, it has to, it must, ensure the strength of the publicly funded education system."

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I'm hearing the educational system, public and private, saying: "We don't need 16. We're up to it ourselves. We don't need that type of protection. We don't want that type of favouritism. We're up to meeting the challenge ourselves, because if we're not up to meeting it, we know where we're going to be going." It's strange that the government members are arguing, "Oh, no, you do need that protection. That's why we have 16."

The people who are on the field, public, private and community, are saying: "We're up to meeting the challenge. Look at our track record. Look at the things we've accomplished." The government's saying: "Wait a minute, now. You need 16."

I do not see how 16 will meet the issues brought forward by both the public and the private training sectors in the province. I do not see why that should be one of the objects of OTAB. They should be able to coordinate and make the most effective use of that which is out there, and send out a message that that is what they're going to do. And those who provide service should be able to meet the challenge, because if they're not able to meet the challenge, then OTAB will be looking to what group can make the most effective use.

Therefore, I go back to the second point I brought up: Why do you need 16? Why don't we just listen to what people said to us? Why don't we just say: "They're right. Let's take 16 out."

They're right: The public and private trainers of this province are right. They are ready and are looking forward

to it. It's not a hand-wringing exercise. They're looking forward to meeting these challenges. It's a great, great thing they want to do. They don't want 16. Why can't we just say: "This is what they've said. Let's do it." I don't understand why you are putting words in a piece of legislation which will have effect, which do have intent. Why can't we listen to those people? Why can't we accept the amendment that has been brought forward by my colleague?

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, we see these as complementary, that we're not favouring one group over the other. Also, I think you're isolating a section of the bill without looking at other sections, which is the board of governors having representative from all the training sectors on that board and then the reference group to make sure that OTAB does operate in the way it's laid out in 14 and 15.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to ask Mr Wilson a specific question. As legislators, sometimes we look at these pieces of legislation and then we don't really think out how these wonderful words we have and these clauses and sections are going to be acted upon.

Let's envision that we've got an LTAB somewhere, and the local board has asked for some proposals to provide a certain type of training. It has—I don't know—three or four proposals before it. One of the proposals comes from community college X, that lately has had a bad reputation, especially in that course delivery. The students have been leaving, whatever; it's a bad faculty person. I'm not sure what it is, but they've had some problems. It is known in the community that for this particular course community college X is not delivering a good program. There is somebody in the area, though, who is delivering a very good program.

These people on the board have instructions, and their instructions are right here in this objects section. They're going to see that, "Under 15, I'm to make effective use of all the resources out there, but 16 says that I am to seek to ensure the strength of the publicly funded system."

What is this going to do when the board has to make a decision as to who will be delivering the service, when it appears that, in this case, let's say the publicly funded system is not the appropriate one, that in this particular course, it doesn't seem to be effective instruction?

That's the thing I worry about. We've got to bring ourselves down to the level of how the board's going to operate and the signal this sends. Is this not going to conflict with common sense, that people might say: "In this case, the meat-cutting course maybe should be provided by trainer X over here rather than college X that, gee, just seems to have failed lately in this particular area. They don't have the right personnel or they don't have the most modern equipment or whatever it is." That's what I worry about: that we're giving a prejudice here.

Mr Offer: We're tying their hands.

Mr Ramsay: As my colleague says, we're tying their hands to prevent them, maybe, from picking the very best for our workers, and we've got to realize that, number one, we're trying to do the best for our working people. How do you answer that? That's what I worry about in the practical application of this stuff.

Mr Gary Wilson: I don't think you have to worry about that, Mr Ramsay, because OTAB isn't being compelled to buy services from any trainer. It's just that the objects set out what they have to keep in mind when they do purchase the services. But as this paragraph says, it's within the scope of OTAB's operations, which includes a cost-effective way of meeting its purposes. Obviously they've got to keep that in mind: When they look at the two programs, they're not going to go to a program that doesn't meet their needs at inordinate cost. As I say, you don't have to worry about that.

Mr Ramsay: So you're saying this clause will not give preferential treatment to publicly funded education systems?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

Mr Ramsay: Okay. That begs the question of what it's there for, then. I just don't understand.

The Chair: All in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please indicate. All opposed? Mr Ramsay's motion is defeated.

Ms Cunningham, please.

Mrs Cunningham: I think it's interesting that there has been an attempt once again by my Liberal colleague to improve upon the legislation on behalf of the public who came before the committee and that we are attempting to do the same thing in a different way. I suppose it would be appropriate to table the wording.

We're now looking at paragraph 4(1)15 of the objects, and the wording we would like to use is as follows:

"To make effective use of Ontario's public and private educational and training resources such as schools, community colleges, universities and private sector trainers."

We've expanded upon 15 so we can have some consistency in intent with regard to 16. I'm wondering if the government could respond and let us know if there's anything it would like to add to the debate or if in fact this attempt meets—at least some thought.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, the problem with putting a list in is that you limit it to the list of items that are there. You shut down the possibility that anything else could be included. So the way it's listed here, in our 15, "to make effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources," just says that: It's the diverse educational and training resources that are now in the province, and presumably that could be formed in the future.

Mr Sutherland: I just want to respond. When I look at this and then I look at the London unemployment help centre, which Ms Cunningham is very familiar with—it's also a Jobs Ontario broker and provides training programs—I'd like to know which category it would fit in, based on the categories she's presented. I think that example, by itself, brings forward what Mr Wilson has said.

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Mrs Cunningham: Actually, Mr Sutherland has a point. I'm asking him what he would add to 15 so that, if they're not included—what could we add? Or tell me where you think they're included. I think they're included,

but if you feel they're left out in some way, what would you change here? I think it's a good example.

Mr Sutherland: But that shows the problem Mr Wilson presented, when you list it specifically as in the amendment versus the current wording. I don't consider them fitting under any of the groups you've listed there. If you keep listing, that becomes the problem in terms of limiting. That's why when you say "diverse," that allows you a much greater deal of flexibility than listing the specific ones.

Mrs Cunningham: In specific response, I think they're definitely a public training resource and they are covered under 15. It's as simple as that. By underlining both public and private in 15, my guess is that that probably deletes any of the concerns that private trainers or private colleges may have. Whether we like it or not, a lot of the private training institutions in Ontario are doing work right now that isn't done by any of the public sector, especially in some of the apprenticeship training. I think they're feeling somewhat threatened when we talk about strengthening the publicly funded systems.

Because we know about the ideology of the government, we didn't think for a minute that the government would say we should be strengthening both the public and private training sectors. We were reasonable and responsible with regard to our expectations there. But I did think, although you underlined your priority for publicly funded education systems—which I'm a great supporter of, as you can imagine—that you would at least want to expand upon the "effective use of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources," given that you underlined your favouritism towards publicly funded resources, by including "public and private" in the "effective use of," that you'd make effective use of both public and private sectors. But you go a step further: to ensure the strength of the publicly funded systems, and that OTAB wasn't going to put any effort into ensuring the strength of the private.

But making effective use of both is probably a responsible object of OTAB, so I don't buy into your argument. If you don't like lists, then why wouldn't you have supported the Liberal motion which says, "To make effective use of all of Ontario's diverse educational and training resources" and not list any particular one as being more effective, as you did in paragraph 16? If you don't like lists, your argument is definitely not consistent with the position you took with regard to the Liberal amendment, because you have listed the publicly funded education system as a priority for ensuring its strength. That's a list: It's a short list, but it's a list. Your argument is inconsistent, but should I be surprised?

Mrs Witmer: I would certainly support this motion, as I indicated before. I don't believe we should be giving preference to strengthening Ontario's publicly funded education systems. I believe it's incumbent upon OTAB to ensure that no specific sector involved in the delivery of training is given preferential treatment. We have to accept the fact that there are many excellent training programs available at the present time. We need to accept the fact that competition between the private sector training industry

and the publicly funded system is healthy, and I think we need to allow the marketplace to make purchasing decisions. We can't have government subsidies favouring one sector over the other, as the government seems to indicate it's going to do if it's going to support and ensure the strength of Ontario's publicly funded education systems. This is far, far too important.

We need to provide the best possible training opportunities for people in this province, and I would encourage the government to eliminate section 16 of these objectives and to adopt the motion we have here: "To make effective use of Ontario's public and private educational and training resources such as schools, community colleges, universities and private sector trainers." We need to do everything possible to strengthen the education and the training delivery networks, and certainly this would help ensure that is done in order that we have the most effective training system available to us.

Ms Haeck: Mr Kormos, are you going to introduce your guest?

The Chair: He's a friend, not a guest. Guests are people like mere acquaintances.

Ms Haeck: Oh, I know Bill is not a mere acquaintance; that's for sure.

Mr Sutherland: Please introduce him.

The Chair: Friends are like Mayor Longo of Thorold, who's welcome at this committee hearing. Unfortunately, he's not a member of the Legislative Assembly, so he can't exercise his rights under the standing orders to participate in committees that he's not necessarily a member of. Were he a member of the Legislative Assembly, though, I would accord him his democratic right to participate in committee, notwithstanding that he wasn't a member of that particular committee. I would not only accord him that right, but I would encourage him to fulfil his responsibilities as a member of the assembly, because I believe in that very democratic process and I encourage it. And I would hope that my associates who are also members of the Legislative Assembly, who sit as chairs in their respective committees, would accord me the same right and privilege. To fail to do that would be an assault on democracy, in my opinion.

Mrs Cunningham: I still have the floor.

The Chair: Go right ahead, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Welcome, Mr Mayor. This used to be democracy in progress, but it's taken a different turn in the last couple of days. I'm about to give you a good example of that.

During these OTAB hearings, with regard to just two paragraphs in this legislation, 15 and 16 under subsection 4(1), we're looking at objects, and there was a lot of controversy around this. The issue is whether we support one sector of training more than the other; whether we even recognize them as being important and worthy of ensuring the strengths of these organizations, whether they be publicly funded or otherwise.

There were, for the committee's perusal—I think it's stated well for all us, from pages 29 to 37. I can't begin to

tell you what that really means, except that within those pages there were 65 recommendations for change for us to consider. We have spent the last hour now looking at one amendment and a few more minutes looking at another suggestion for amendment.

These hearings took place over three weeks. They cost us \$53,000, Mr Mayor, if you can imagine accountability: \$53,000, basically money to move the equipment and for us; we get paid a daily per diem in our expenses. As important, I think, is the cost we can't put on these hearings; that is, the individual costs of the people who took the time to make their presentations time-wise, maybe financially for them to travel. But I think the biggest cost of all is the hope they had that we would listen.

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Since these hearings started, the government has found very inconsistent reasons not to support us. To recognize only the publicly funded education and training resources as being important enough for inclusion with regard to ensuring that we make effective use of them—it's really hard to understand the inconsistency in this legislation, but we're not alone. Some of those 65 recommendations for change given by the presenters were well-thought-through, and certainly a lot of heart went into them. I can only say that the inconsistencies of this government at this point in time are very discouraging.

I'm wondering if I can take this opportunity, before we call the vote, to ask the parliamentary assistant if there is going to be any give and take on the side of the government with regard to amendments because I'm not sticking around to put up with this lack of response.

Mr Len Wood (Cochrane North): Are we going to have another by-election?

Mrs Cunningham: There are two by-elections. I don't think the NDP has candidates yet. The date of the by-election is April 1, April Fool's Day. It suits this government to choose a date like that.

Mr Wood: I thought you said you were going to quit.

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, no, I didn't say I was going to quit. I just said I wasn't going to waste my time; there's a difference. This is wasting my time. Quitting is different. But I'm asking a question before this vote is called.

Mr Gary Wilson: I must say I'm surprised, Mrs Cunningham, when you mentioned the cost of this. You introduced so many diversions, talking about things like by-elections, for instance. Anyway, as I said, we will look at these amendments as they come forward to deliberate on them, and it's their merits we're considering here. It's a question of hearing and evaluating, and I think that's what we're doing. We're presenting arguments about why the bill is written as it is. We've listened to the comments that have come forward.

You mentioned the number of comments that were made on 15 and 16. I think it's partly a question of quality and quantity. It's one thing to point to the number, but another to look to see how they affect. The way they're written, in our view, presents a balanced view of the training resources in the province. And 15 and 16 are complementary—they don't exclude each other—and they're only

one aspect of the training component: There are two directors representing the education and training sector and there will be a reference group. So with those things, we expect that all the resources will be highlighted in the deliberations of OTAB.

Mrs Cunningham: With regard to the very last point that was made about public input on section 16, it was put to us by the YMCA that, "This objective is not compatible with the overall objective of OTAB." That says it all. It's just not compatible. But it is the ideology of this government, and I can understand why you're sticking with it.

Mr Sutherland: Dianne, you're sounding more like Mike Harris every day. I'm getting worried.

Mrs Cunningham: As a matter of fact, if I were you, Mr Parliamentary Assistant, the next time you give your reasons, you should pick up your marching orders and read them. Barring a spelling mistake or something, I really can't imagine that the members of this committee are speaking for the public they represent, and I'm not even annoyed with them. I'm a little bit annoyed with the member from Oxford because I had high hopes for him—

Interjections.

Mr Sutherland: I'm getting annoyed with you, Dianne, because you're sounding more like Mike Harris, and there used to be a distinction between the two of you.

The Chair: One moment. I want to introduce you to the person on my far right. Her name is Deborah Caruso. She's very competent. She works very hard. Her job is to ensure that Hansard accurately records what is said. She probably isn't paid anywhere near enough money as she should be. She's probably entitled to much more. The last thing she needs is people talking at the same time; that makes her already difficult task all that much more difficult. Please, out of consideration for her and her colleagues in Hansard, don't talk at the same time.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I don't know whether you were looking more at myself or the member from Oxford, but nine of 10 times it is my problem; this time it was his. He interjected when I was speaking.

I only want to say that this objective is not compatible with the overall objective of OTAB. I'm not expecting to win it. I raised the issue of the by-election because we need all the help we can get down here. Let's hope we have no more new members of the government, because there are far too many right now who don't think. I'm only going to say to our guests that \$53,000 would have gone a long way in Welland—

The Chair: Thorold.

Mrs Cunningham: Thorold; I'm sorry. It would have gone a long way in Welland as well; I think I can say that. I'm looking at the member right now. I was on a school board for 15 years, and I was accountable because the public could come and see me at work. Right now, I can tell you, most members of this Legislative Assembly are not accountable because the public in fact doesn't see what they do. But it's our responsibility to make sure we represent the citizens well, and I can only say there are a few

members on this committee who can kiss their seats good-bye next time round.

Mr Sutherland: I hope we can have a vote on the proposed amendment. We could get into a great discussion about accountability. I think all of us try to be accountable in our own ridings to our own constituents, and I don't think it's fair to pass that type of judgement on members without knowing what they do in their own ridings.

I must say that I am disappointed in Ms Cunningham and her grandiose speeches today. I've always admired Ms Cunningham for being a straight shooter and not getting caught up in the rhetoric. Unfortunately, today she is beginning to sound more like all the other politicians who get involved with lots of rhetoric.

I hope we can move to a vote on her amendment. She's put some time and effort into presenting the amendment and I think we should have a decision made on that.

Mrs Cunningham: Could the record show, Mr Chairman, that the member from Oxford was smiling throughout his former discourse?

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am.

Mrs Witmer: I'd like to call the question.

The Chair: In committee it's not for a member to call the question.

Mrs Witmer: Let's get on with the job.

Mr Sutherland: Hear, hear.

The Chair: Are you suggesting that the standing orders should not be abided by and that there are no time restrictions on members' speeches or the number of times that members can speak? This is not the Legislative Assembly.

Mrs Witmer: No, I'm just suggesting that there are some very significant amendments that we still need to deal with, and we only have two days left. I would suggest that we move on.

The Chair: Wise counsel, Ms Witmer.

All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. All those opposed to Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Ms Cunningham, please.

Mrs Cunningham: I move that paragraph 16 of subsection 4(1) of the bill be struck out.

Mr Sutherland: On a point of order, Mr Chair: Is this motion not the same as the one that was presented by Mr Ramsay and therefore we've already had a vote on it? Therefore, is this motion still in order? That's a ruling from you.

The Chair: It's close, but it doesn't violate the standing orders. I appreciate your concerns and you make a valid comment, but I considered that some time ago when I reviewed the amendments.

Mr Sutherland: That's fine. Thank you.

Mrs Cunningham: In the spirit of the member for Oxford's observations, Mr Chairman, I certainly agree that there has been substantive debate on this issue, so I would refrain from making comment.

The Chair: All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. All those opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

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Mrs Cunningham: I move that subsection 4(2) of the bill be amended by adding the following clause:

"(e) operate in a manner to ensure that training programs result in jobs."

You'll remember earlier, when we were talking about the purposes of the act—in fact, we made amendments at the very beginning—I think the most significant purpose of this legislation is the recognition of job creation and wealth creation. Both my Liberal colleagues and we have tried in two different parts of the legislation, under the purposes and the objects, to include as a signal to the workers and to the public of Ontario that this OTAB body would take very seriously the recognition of job creation and wealth creation as an underlying purpose of the legislation. We spent some amount of time on that.

It hasn't, of course, been recognized as part of the purposes or definitely not as part of the objects to this point. Therefore, we're doing our very best to give the government yet another opportunity to recognize at least job creation as an invaluable part of the legislation. The purpose, therefore, of this amendment is to do just that: to say that job creation is important enough to recognize in the legislation and that we should be operating all of our training to ensure that training programs result in jobs.

I'd like to see if anybody would like to comment on that, especially the government.

The Chair: Of course they're not obliged to comment on it.

Mrs Cunningham: They probably don't have any marching orders if they don't, because anybody can say anything about this. For those of you who aren't following, it's on page 4 of the bill, subsection (2).

The Chair: Mr Wilson, do you feel obliged to comment on that?

Mr Gary Wilson: It's not a question of obligation at all. I want to participate in this discussion, although I was waiting to hear Mrs Cunningham mention the groups that brought this forward, as she's often raised that in the past as being one of the—

Mrs Cunningham: Would you like me to start reading them into the record?

Mr Gary Wilson: It's just that this comes as a surprise in this section.

Mrs Cunningham: Does it, in this section?

The Chair: This is one of those nine times out of 10, isn't it, Ms Cunningham?

Mrs Cunningham: It's 9.5 times out of 10, pushing 9.9.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd like to point out that there is a fair bit of training; we need to have the flexibility that it won't necessarily end up in jobs. There's pre-employment training to bring people to the threshold for further training programs, and I don't think you would want to cut out those programs.

Having said that, of course we do want to see the training end up in jobs. That's the whole reason for trying to improve the training structure in the province, because it's been recognized that there are areas where training should be occurring where it's not, and areas where training has occurred and the jobs just aren't there. So we're trying to make it much more sensitive to what's out in the province. So there is that aspect, and there's some of the literacy training, for instance, that would go on that would bring people up to a point where they could engage further training.

I'm not sure, either, what kind of restrictions that would bring to programs where the jobs just weren't occurring that wouldn't exist normally, that you would hope the programs wouldn't be there in any case if the jobs aren't there, because this is the kind of—

Mrs Cunningham: Would you repeat what you just said, please? "I would hope that the programs aren't there if the jobs aren't there." Is that what you just said?

Mr Gary Wilson: No. I think I said the opposite, that we—

Mrs Cunningham: Well, I hope so. We'll check the Hansards, won't we? You certainly woke me up with whatever you said. Say it again. Say what you meant.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm trying to say that we don't want to be training for jobs that aren't there. In that sense, I think the thing is self-justifying. But again, there are particular aspects of training that won't necessarily lead to jobs, that I think this would be restrictive of.

Mrs Witmer: I'm disappointed to hear Mr Wilson say that OTAB is not going to be established with the primary purpose of helping individuals, through training, access jobs, because I thought that's what OTAB was intended to do. I don't think we're going to have little airy-fairy training programs just to make somebody feel good if we don't feel that there's going to be a job available and that it doesn't match the skills that are required.

There needs to be a tremendous amount of research done by this government in order to put together what's needed in this province and then put the training programs in place to ensure that we have the knowledgeable, highly skilled individuals to access those jobs. I think we need to put in here, we need to state, that that indeed is the intent. We need "to operate in a manner to ensure that training programs result in jobs."

This isn't to make anybody feel good. We're looking for jobs, jobs that are going to lead to wealth creation in this province and jobs that, if they lead to wealth creation, are going to improve the quality of life of every individual in this province. That's the intent of OTAB: training for jobs. There's no other purpose. If there is, I'd like you to tell me what it is. I don't know why you can't add "to ensure that training programs result in jobs," because that's our overall objection.

Mr Gary Wilson: As you point out, Ms Witmer, that is the overall objective. To limit it to this section raises questions: You can't ensure that every training program will result in jobs. I've already pointed out a couple areas where it would be impossible, in any case.

Mrs Witmer: Yes, but you can't operate in a manner that's consistent with the economic and social policies either. None of that is real, but you attempt to do it.

I'm saying, let's identify what OTAB is all about. OTAB is all about providing people with the skills that will enable them to get jobs in this province. As we all know, there are hundreds of jobs that are begging for individuals to fill them, but we don't have the trained and skilled individuals to fit into those jobs. That's what we need to be taking a look at.

It's like nurses in my own community. Conestoga College is training nurses. Why, I don't know, because we don't have jobs in Ontario for nurses. The nurses from Conestoga College are going to the United States. The Ontario taxpayer is paying to subsidize the nursing program.

We have to do the job more effectively. We need to take a look at: What are the needs in the province of Ontario? How are we going to meet those needs? What training programs are going to be necessary? Taxpayers can no longer afford to pay for training programs for which there are no jobs.

Mr Gary Wilson: We couldn't agree with you more that that is what the goals of OTAB are. We think that by sharing the responsibility for coming up with the training programs with the labour market partners, we will get that sensitivity you speak of, when you say there are jobs out there that are going unfilled because there aren't trained workers. Obviously, workers or people who'd like to be working know that the access to those jobs is through training, so there is a serious concern to make sure we do get a training structure that will answer those needs.

1730

The Chair: I want to bid farewell to Mayor Longo and to Ken Todd, the city administrator for Thorold. Mr Todd as well, had he been a member of the Legislative Assembly, would have been encouraged to utilize his democratic right to participate in the committee process, notwithstanding that he isn't a member of a particular committee. That's something that's very important to the rules. But as neither Mr Todd nor Mr Longo are members of the Legislative Assembly, all I can do is tell them welcome to the committee room and bid them a safe trip back home to Thorold in the heart of the Niagara Peninsula.

Mr Sutherland, did you want to say something?

Mr Sutherland: I just want to echo what Mr Wilson said. I'm not disagreeing on where the intent of the amendment's coming from. I think we all agree that jobs are what we want as the final result: "training programs result in jobs." No decision has been made on whether literacy programs go to OTAB, but if I were on the board and I looked at this amendment, I would say, "Well, that program may not result in a job, so are we going to do that type of thing?"

Mrs Witmer: I'd say it does.

Mr Sutherland: But the intent here implies that the actual training program has to almost directly result in a job. The more traditional apprenticeship programs, electrician whatever, would seem like more logical ones that OTAB would do. A literacy program may in the long run,

but there's certainly a sense that there's probably four or five other steps in the process before you get to the job. The sense I get from looking at the amendment proposed here is that it doesn't go directly from the training program provided into the job, and therefore that's very limiting and would not be in OTAB's mandate. I think that's where the problem comes, as Mr Wilson has said, in terms of supporting this amendment. No one's disagreeing with your intent; I think that's what we all want.

Mrs Witmer: It's an area for interpretation.

Mr Sutherland: Sure, it's a different interpretation, in that this amendment may be very limiting in what type of training programs could be offered.

Mr McGuinty: Here before us today is an amendment which will, perhaps more than any other amendment to be moved, tie this bill to the ground. The bill talks about a number of noble objectives. It talks about "in the context of a fair and just society" bringing about "improvement of the lives of workers and potential workers." It talks about "principles of access and equity." It talks about "promoting Ontario's linguistic duality" and "recognizes and supports the diversity and pluralism of Ontario's population." It talks about "ensuring access and equity in labour force development programs and services." It talks about "identifying and seeking to eliminate systemic and other discriminatory barriers." It talks about "ensuring that the special needs of people with disabilities are accommodated."

But nowhere does it specifically mention that ultimately its object is to create jobs. Surely that's the purpose behind Bill 96. If we accomplish all of those other noble objectives and don't provide those people with jobs, then surely this can't be deemed to be a success. We're not here to train for its own sake. We're not here to broaden minds. We're not here to engage students in academic exercises. We're here, at the end of the day, to create jobs.

I want to tell you about a little experience I just had last Thursday in the riding. I went to visit a private trainer, one who is in great fear that he and his two colleagues—it's a small operation—will be discriminated against under Bill 96. This fellow led me through a class of some 12 students. He receives funding from a federal program. He is required to track his students, and he is only going to receive funding for further programs if he can show that he's able to get these students jobs. He's not training for the sake of training; it's hardly a good investment to train people just for the sake of training. He has to be able to show, in an objective and concrete manner, that his training is providing jobs. As a result of this hanging over his head, he shops the market regularly and finds out what it is that people's employers out there want, and he ensures that he delivers what is needed. Then he makes every possible effort to place these people in full-time jobs.

That's the kind of operation that is going to discriminated against because of paragraph 16 in section 4, but all that can be properly addressed by Ms Cunningham's amendment, which brings everything back down to earth, nails it down and says, "Yes, what we're after here at the end of the day is jobs." I can't understand why the government

wouldn't support putting something in the bill in black and white that says, "Yes, what we're after here is jobs."

Mrs Cunningham: Just to respond to one of the criticisms of this amendment by the parliamentary assistant, he said this was an overall objective of the government, yet the government wouldn't allow us to put this in the purposes section of the legislation. He criticized that this is not the appropriate section. I'm wondering if there is an appropriate section. I'm just asking for a response.

The Chair: Do you want to respond to that?

Mr Gary Wilson: Sure. The idea is that the whole purpose of the legislation is to make sure that workers can fill jobs that are there, because they'll have the training, and we expect that the kind of economy where jobs are filled by well-trained workers will lead to the investment that will create jobs. But primarily the purpose of OTAB is to make sure a training system works in a way that it's not working now. We think it'll be sensitive because it involves the labour market partners in the decisions. As paragraph 12 of the objects clearly sets out, it's "to seek to ensure that labour force development programs and services are designed, delivered and evaluated in light of the needs and priorities of all Ontario's employers, workers and potential workers." Surely, "the needs and priorities" covers the issues you've raised and that would be uppermost in the minds of the groups listed here. That's the kind of responsiveness with training that will lead into the purposes that you are trying to stipulate in this amendment.

Mrs Cunningham: Again, fudging. It has nothing to do with the words "job creation." It's just another phrase that will support the object, but the object isn't stated.

The most frightening part of this section on the criteria, with regard to giving direction to OTAB with the word "shall" in it, given what we've heard today, is clause 4(2)(a), where we tell them to "operate in a manner that's consistent with the...policies...of the government of Ontario." That's frightening, as far as I'm concerned, given what we've heard. And then the (b) part—which we're trying to amend, by the way—says "operate within a framework of accountability to the government of Ontario." Normally, I would support that kind of thing, but given the hollow responses to the amendments we are putting on behalf of the public, it's making me very nervous about OTAB being accountable to this government, either within its own framework or its labour market policy, as it's so inconsistent. It just scares me.

You've got those two issues on the table in this section. We would be giving the public a lot of encouragement and a lot of reasons to feel relieved in terms of at least clauses (a) and (b) if we could at least in part (e), in spite of the government of the day—certainly in spite this government, which has today responded in such a superficial manner to the amendments we've put forth after \$53,000 worth of input in these public hearings, let alone the hearings it held on its own on the makeup of the local boards; that wasn't supposed to be the focus of those hearings, but, for reasons that none of us understand, it was.

At least we could give some encouragement to the public to say that these boards shall operate in a manner—that's all it says: operate in a manner. It doesn't say "ensure," which is the argument the member for Oxford and you were putting forward, saying that you were misleading the public by ensuring. It says "operate in a manner to ensure that training programs result in jobs."

Surely that could be an objective. Surely that could be a criterion of OTAB, as we didn't put job creation in the objects. Surely we could put it in the criteria for the responsibility.

I'm not sure how late you want to go today—

The Chair: Go ahead.

Mrs Cunningham: I have more to say in this regard, I have some quotes to make, but my colleague has just told me that we agreed to sit till 5:30 tonight, so I'm not sure—

The Chair: I frankly hadn't been looking at the clock, as is the Chair's prerogative. I was hoping we might put in a little extra time to make up for some of the recesses that have occurred during the day. Are you suggesting that it's time to adjourn?

Mr Mills: I am.

The Chair: Mr Mills has drawn my attention to the clock. It's 5:40. We are adjourned until tomorrow afternoon at 2 pm.

The committee adjourned at 1741.

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

Conway, Sean G. (Renfrew North/-Nord L)

Dadamo, George (Windsor-Sandwich ND)

Jordan, Leo (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

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Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

*Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)

*In attendance / présents

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Cooper, Mike (Kitchener-Wilmot ND) for Mr Huget

Cunningham, Dianne (London North/-Nord PC) for Mr Turnbull

Haeck, Christel (St Catharines-Brock ND) for Ms Murdock

Mills, Gordon (Durham East/-Est ND) for Mr Klopp

Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway

Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Dadamo

Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Waters

Witmer, Elizabeth (Waterloo North/-Nord PC) for Mr Jordan

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:

Landry, Peter, director, organizational design and labour relations, OTAB project, Ministry of Education and Training

Wilson, Gary, parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education and Training

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Schuh, Cornelia, deputy chief legislative counsel

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Wednesday 24 February 1993

Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and
Adjustment Board Act, 1993

Assemblée législative de l'Ontario

Deuxième intersession, 35^e législature

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Mercredi 24 février 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
ontarien de formation et
d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre

Chair: Peter Kormos
Clerk: Tannis Manikel

Président : Peter Kormos
Greffière : Tannis Manikel

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Wednesday 24 February 1993

The committee met at 1405 in committee room 1.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 2:05. Obviously, some members are delayed arriving. We shall wait.

The committee recessed at 1405 and resumed at 1414.

The Chair: We're ready to resume. Still on the floor is Ms Cunningham's motion.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): Mr Chairman, I have nothing more to say to this motion.

The Chair: Thank you. Is there any further discussion or debate around Ms Cunningham's motion?

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): Was that for subsection 4(2)?

The Chair: Yes, ma'am.

Mrs Witmer: Yes, okay.

The Chair: Is there any further discussion or debate around Ms Cunningham's motion? All in favour of the motion please indicate. Opposed? The motion is defeated.

We're now to consideration of section 4 of the bill. Any discussion around section 4 of the bill? All in favour of section 4 of the bill please indicate. Opposed? Section 4 of the bill carries.

We're now addressing section 5 of the bill. Any discussion around section 5 of the bill. All in favour of section 5 of the bill please indicate. Opposed? Section 5 of the bill carries.

We're now addressing section 6 of the bill. Any debate around section 6 of the bill? All in favour of section 6 of the bill please indicate. Opposed? Section 6 of the bill carries.

We're addressing section 7 of the bill. Any debate around section 7 of the bill? All in favour of section 7 of the bill please indicate. Opposed? Section 7 of the bill carries.

We're now addressing section 8 of the bill. Any debate around section 8 of the bill? All in favour of section 8 of the bill please indicate. Opposed? Section 8 of the bill carries.

The Chair: Ms Witmer.

Mrs Witmer: Yes, Mr Kormos.

The Chair: There are two motions that have been filed with respect to subsection 9(2) of the bill.

Mrs Witmer: I move that subsection 9(2) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Same

"(2) There shall be 27 directors, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as follows:

"1. Nine directors representing business, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service sector and three the construction sector.

"2. Nine directors representing labour, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service sector and three the construction sector.

"3. Five directors representing educators and trainers, one of whom shall represent school boards, one community colleges, one universities, one private sector trainers and one community-based trainers.

"4. One director representing francophones.

"5. One director representing persons with disabilities.

"6. One director representing racial minorities.

"7. One director representing women.

"Co-chairs

"(2.1) One of the directors representing business and one of the directors representing labour shall be designated as co-chairs."

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. Go ahead.

Mrs Witmer: What we have endeavoured to do in this particular amendment is to expand the board of directors to 27 seats, to ensure that the business community, the labour community, the education community and the social groups are fairly represented.

Although it's not specified in the legislation, the government has indicated that the Ontario Federation of Labour is going to be given seven of the eight labour seats on OTAB board and that the building trades council is going to be given the eighth seat.

This particular configuration has been criticized by both the business community and the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario. As you know, the construction sector in this province has a long history of proactive investment in the training of its workforce and yet it has only been allocated one seat on the OTAB board. The Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council noted in its presentation, and I quote from that presentation:

"Successful cooperation between business and labour is already evident in some areas where the use of apprenticeship is dominant. The construction sector is an example of an effective...partnership, where considerable consensus already exists on the value and nature of apprenticeship as the preferred approach to skills development.

"It is important, where consensus like this now exists, that it be preserved and supported. OTAB should provide such sectors with the latitude and the flexibility to enable their unique needs to determine their...training priorities."

In terms of absolute numbers involved in apprenticeship training, the construction industry is at the present time the largest single group. It represents somewhere in the

neighbourhood of 48% of all apprenticeships. This compares to 8% in service-related apprenticeships, 28% in motive power apprenticeships and 17% in industrial-related apprenticeships.

1420

The current OTAB board makeup does not reflect—and I want to stress the words “not reflect”—the important contribution the construction industry has made to the training of its workforce, and there needs to be some recognition.

Therefore, the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario has recommended that Bill 96 be amended to give equal representation from the construction, the industrial and the service sectors for both labour and management. If we keep in mind that very important contribution they have made in the training of their own workforce, that number of 48% really is very significant.

The other major change we're asking for here in the composition of the board is the increase in the number of educator directors from two to five. In many of the presentations that we listened to and those we received by mail, there was concern that the educational community was underrepresented. I think we would all agree the educational community has played a very significant role in the provision of training and of programs in the past.

We're asking for an expansion so that we would have, instead of two educational representatives, five. We would have one from school boards in this province—and that would include the English public, English separate, French public and French separate—a representative from the community colleges, a representative from the universities, a representative from the private sector trainers group and community-based trainers. These are all groups that have made a very significant contribution in the past to the provision of training programs, and we feel it's very important they have a seat on the OTAB board.

As you know, we heard presentation after presentation from the education and the training community requesting far greater representation on the board. I have to stress to you that we have many valuable training programs that are assisting Ontarians to actively participate in the economy. I know in my own community the school boards and community colleges and the trainers are very actively involved, as well as the universities, and really we have to take a look and ensure that the board of OTAB reflects the diversity of the programs that are provided at the present time.

We need to build on that base and we need to ensure that we build on the infrastructure that is already in place. There isn't a need to throw it out, to discard it. I think we need to always remember to build on our strengths and improve on our weaknesses, and certainly the educational community has demonstrated that it has done an outstanding job in the provision of training in the past.

Hopefully, then, the government would agree to this amendment to expand the board to 27 seats to ensure that we do have fair representation of business, labour, education and the social groups.

I think I'll conclude my comments at this time. I might have something further to say later.

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands):

Thank you, Ms Witmer, for your arguments in support of the amendment. I must say that we're not in favour of this amendment for some solid reasons.

We heard during the public hearings, as well as I think some of the discussion we've had already in the clause-by-clause reading, and that is that the overall thrust of the governing board that we're looking for for OTAB is consumer-driven; that is, the people who are actually going to be needing the services are the ones we want to have sort of the guiding role on the board of governors. That's why the seats for the directors from the education and training sector are being limited to two.

You might recall from the public presentations that although they argued for more seats, there was the admission that just by coming together in a way that had never happened before showed the interests that they shared. I think Richard Johnston, from the Council of Regents, mentioned how he was surprised by how much they did share in common, and we heard this in other presentations as well, that this had never happened before. Just the need to come together to discuss OTAB showed that they did share a lot in common.

It was felt, too, that in discussing their interests through the steering committee and coming forward with the nomination of two people, that the two people seemed to be speaking for the group as a whole in a way that we expect the board of governors to work, as well, or the governing board, the directors, because they represent not only the sectors they come from, but very much the public interest. That's the basis of their appointment to the board by the Lieutenant Governor. There's that aspect that is very important for us to keep in OTAB if it's going to be true to its thrust as a consumer-driven vehicle.

The other point that you've raised with regard—I should say with the educators and trainers, there will be the reference group as well, so the two directors will be in close touch with the interests of the group as a whole.

As far as changing the representation for business and labour to reflect more of the construction trades is concerned, as I think you mentioned, there is already one seat designated on the labour side for the provincial building and trades—

Ms Witmer: One of eight.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right, so they definitely have one already. There is the reminder, too, that both business and labour that construction represents are a very important part of our economy, to keep in mind when they come forward with their nominees.

You mentioned also the basis that 48% of the apprenticeship programs are devoted to construction trades, whereas apprenticeship, while it is very important, is only one of the components of the training and labour adjustment. Certainly, there will be other ways of deriving that or drawing on that experience that the construction trades have had with apprenticeship, namely, through the councils that are also part of the OTAB model. There will be councils set up that can include a council on apprenticeship, and it would be expected that the construction industry

would be well represented on that council to make sure that apprenticeship keeps up with the changing needs of the industry. As well, what works in the construction apprenticeship can be transferred to other industries.

Another factor is that in adjusting the directors' seats in the way you have to include more education and trainers is that you upset the balance. Business and labour then lose the main thrust that they enjoy now and that has been agreed to by the labour market partners, to see that business and labour have the predominant role on the governing board.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Wilson, I'd like to maybe just address that last point you just made. While this is not an exact model of my motion that we'll be discussing later on, and I see Mrs Cunningham has actually many options she wants to discuss here, what she's done here, in adding I guess five more seats, has still kept the balance. That's why, I guess, she's increased the business and the labour representatives to nine each. If you look at the educational and the equity people altogether, they're nine also, so you still have, in that model, the clients—I agree with you in that; it should be customer-driven—you still have the customers in control of it with this model.

I think you almost cannot address the representation without talking about the voting. What I've tried to do is to ensure with my amendment, which we'll discuss later on, is to strike the balance so the customer still has the say, but to make sure the voting is not equally weighted, and therefore business and labour would be in the driver's seat. I think that's important, that the balance be struck. I think you have to take the two and differentiate between the two things: voting and representation.

1430

While I agree with Mrs Cunningham that it's important to have all five education reps there—even though, in my model, and I'm not sure about hers, we don't give them equal power—even in her model they still are underrepresented in relation to business and labour altogether. But it's important, and I agree with Mrs Cunningham, that they be at the table, because, number one, these people have a lot to learn. They have a lot to learn from some of the sectors of the economy that have been very successful in skills training, and Mrs Witmer has mentioned one of those sectors: that's the construction sector.

I can see why Mrs Cunningham has recommended that we break down the representation into various sectors, and why she's given three reps from the construction trades and industry to be there, because they are the most successful. The past Premier's Council had outlined that, how the apprenticeship program had really been a dismal failure in this country, except for that one particular sector, the construction sector.

Really, there is balance here, and not only by having all five representatives from the educators-trainers there. They, as I said, have much to learn from the others; they also will have a lot to contribute and they have very different viewpoints and experiences to contribute to the board. That's why I believe that in order to make sure all those viewpoints are expressed—it's more important than just what the reference group is going to accomplish—that we

have these people directly there. I think that's very, very important. If they don't have the power to outvote labour and business, then I think it's quite proper and appropriate that they be there.

I think that's important, and I don't think it upsets the balance. It shouldn't upset labour, it shouldn't upset business, and I think you would have greater cooperation and less suspicion, because I think your reference groups could start to break down if there's suspicion by the people who aren't directly at the board that maybe their viewpoints and their messages are not being broadcast to the board. Therefore, there'd be no suspicion here: all five are there. If we want this to work, you're better to make sure the representation is broad and effective and that everybody supports it.

Now, going back to paragraph 1, in my motion I did not specify the groups of people of the different sectors of the economy that must be there. I've left it open, because maybe in the beginning it'd be a good idea to have a lot of the construction people, because they probably have the most to offer in the beginning. But I didn't box OTAB in to say that it had to be three, three and three because the economy's going to change in the future, and who knows who will have the best expertise or the most to offer, or maybe the most to learn in the future.

I have not specified who in particular has to be there representing the business or labour side, but I think for a start that's not a bad model and it could always be amended in the future.

I'll support Mrs Cunningham now, her motion that it be three, three and three, because I think it's important to make that point, as we, I guess, are going to be doing repeatedly this afternoon: Mrs Cunningham has, I believe, about four options for representation on the board, and then we would come to my motion that will speak to the same matter.

Now, in paragraph 2, when we come to labour, I will have to reiterate what Mrs Witmer had said and I suppose others will say from the opposition benches today, that even though it's not specified in the act, it's certainly the understanding that of the eight proposed labour reps, all are going to have to come from organized labour, and seven of the eight will have to be representatives from OFL-affiliated unions.

This is absolutely wrong if you want to ensure that OTAB has the credibility with the general public and workers and business people in general across this province. It is wrong because in order for people to have a sense of faith in this, they must believe that the representation on OTAB is credible. If we've got people and businesses in parts of the economy that aren't represented there because, for whatever reason, those sectors of the economy don't tend to be represented by organized labour, then there are going to be a lot of people—I guess as many as 70% of the workers out there are going to feel that their voices are not at the table.

I know you have an allegiance to the OFL and that this is an OFL model. They bring in a very strong argument: How could you have representation from workers if it doesn't come through an organization such as a union

which has a democratically elected body? They are democratically elected and certainly can represent those sectors of the economy that they do represent. There'd be nowhere else to go than those unions, for those sectors, and I don't dispute that.

I don't dispute that organized labour can talk on behalf of workers in general on many of the general items and issues that are of concern to working people. But when it comes to a lot of the specifics that OTAB will have to deal with, with training specifically from certain sectors of the economy that need new courses and improvement in courses, there's not going to be the representation there that can speak to those issues, and that's going to be a concern.

You're creating an entity here with a gigantic void in it. It's not complete. It's not inclusive. I really believe that it will not work unless you strive to—I know it's going to be more difficult than just going to unions. I understand it will be difficult to try to find some responsible representation from some of those sectors of the economy. But there are other groups out there. There's the federation of agriculture, for instance. There are professional groups. There is a wide variety of associations and bodies out there that represent other types of work in Ontario that could be here and that have a say could contribute to the deliberations of OTAB.

I would think that would be important. If you really want it to work and you want people to believe in this and to work with your government in the establishment of this, I think that if you change this one section, you'd go a long way towards making OTAB a success in Ontario.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mrs Witmer.

Mrs Witmer: I'm not sure if Mrs Cunningham has anything more to say.

The Chair: Mrs Witmer, are you withdrawing this motion?

Mrs Witmer: Oh, yes. I'll withdraw the motion.

The Chair: Thank you very much. The motion is withdrawn and Mrs Cunningham moves that subsection 9(2) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(2) There shall be 27 directors, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as follows:

"1. Nine directors representing business, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service sector and three the construction sector.

"2. Nine directors representing labour, three of whom shall represent the industrial sector, three the service sector and three the construction sector.

"3. Five directors representing educators and trainers, one of whom shall represent school boards, one community colleges, one universities, one private sector trainers and one community-based trainers.

"4. One director representing francophones.

"5. One director representing persons with disabilities.

"6. One director representing racial minorities.

"7. One director representing women."

Is that correct, Mrs Cunningham?

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): Yes. Thank you.

The Chair: Please speak to your motion.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, we're doing this for technical reasons. We wanted to separate the vote. We wanted to vote on subsection 9(2) in one vote and subsection 9(2), with regard to co-chairs, on another vote. If we do that, then the following will move more smoothly.

The Chair: That's what you've done.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes. So if everybody takes a look, all we're doing is separating the vote on the two different concepts.

Therefore, I would like to thank my colleague Mr Ramsay for his support, and certainly my colleague Elizabeth Witmer for speaking to the former motion as it was put.

The Chair: If I may, Ms Cunningham, perhaps we could—

Mrs Cunningham: Should I read it in?

The Chair: No. It's been read in; the motion's been read in. You've moved it. Ms Witmer, do you want your comments on the previous motion to apply to this motion?

Mrs Witmer: Yes. I would appreciate that.

The Chair: With respect to Mr Ramsay, Ms Witmer and Mr Wilson, do you want your previous comments, the comments on the earlier motion that was withdrawn, to apply to this motion?

Mr Ramsay: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you. Is there any further debate around this motion?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes.

The Chair: Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: I feel this is probably the most important part of the legislation, with regard to the accountability of the OTAB board itself. I also feel it's extremely important for this committee to give this amendment serious consideration for a couple of reasons. This would have been the area where we would've received the most consistent input from the public, in that there were numbers of groups that felt they weren't adequately represented on the OTAB board. We considered them all very carefully and we moved forward with the group that we felt had made, I think, the best case and had the most support for further inclusion. That was the educators and trainers.

1440

The section in the present bill that reads "two directors representing educators and trainers" was, I think, hotly debated by the presenters before the committee. I do apologize, Mr Chairman, for not being here. The parliamentary assistant can see our intent here and he can see the number of motions we have.

Quite frankly, in the first, the concept here is that in order to get a better weighting with the voting mechanism down the road, we've actually got a balance of nine representing business, nine representing labour, five representing the educators and trainers, together with the other four, francophones, persons with disabilities, racial minorities and women. It makes a true tripartite board, and that was the intent here.

I would like to hear from the parliamentary assistant on that concept with the intent of the tripartite board and just a

short comment from him with regard to the public input we received from the education community.

In saying that, I think all of us have been made aware, especially from the school boards and the teachers, of the fact that they feel they need to be represented. We know now that the appointments or the pending appointments actually represent the college sector and the trainer sector. That's my understanding. Please correct me if I'm not right. It was the information that was brought before the committee.

If you would just speak to me for a moment with regard to the intent of this motion, I would very much like to hear from you before we call the vote.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'll reiterate what I said earlier about the fact that we're trying to set up a consumer-driven model so that the people who are leading OTAB will be the ones who require its services and for whom the programs are being designed; that is, business and labour. It's expected business and labour will jointly lead OTAB. Therefore, it's not tripartite in nature but definitely bipartite between business and labour, with the representation of other groups to make sure the broad interests of the province are met.

This also then speaks to the seats for the education and training sector so that they become expert advisers on the design and the delivery of the programs rather than the designers, so that it's again consumer driven rather than provider driven. It's a model that has been consciously developed through consultation with the labour market partners, with the agreement that it would be jointly led by business and labour with the inclusion of other groups that have, as has been pointed out in the hearings and in our deliberations, historically been left out of consideration, as well as an advisory role for the training and education representatives.

We think that by setting it up in the way we have, 8, 8, 4 and 2, this gives us the best workable board of governors to deliberate in a way that we think will reflect the requirement of the joint business and labour led training group.

Mr Ramsay: I'm not sure what the real difference is when you look at the numbers of the original bill being 8, 8, and 6 for the educator-equity group, if we can call it that, and 9, 9 and 9. It's still really driven, the vast majority of the people are from business and labour. You really haven't distorted the representation. You've beefed up, yes, the education side by three, but the basic proportion is still there. It's still driven by the majority of people who represent business and labour.

It really isn't a big distortion of the intention of the government, and especially if you take into account dispute resolution mechanisms and build those in, you can absolutely guarantee that business and labour will dominate this thing. But at the same time, you bring more voices to the table and, I believe, probably promote better cooperation with everybody, because you've got all the trainers there and they all feel they've got a chance at providing training and all can learn from the other groups.

Mrs Cunningham's motion has not really distorted the intent of what you're trying to do. It's still dominated by the two main parties that, I think, all three political parties

here agree should dominate and drive OTAB. Wouldn't you agree that in the amendment we're debating right now, that with 9, 9 and 9, OTAB is still being driven by business and labour?

Mr Gary Wilson: From hearing your remarks, Mr Ramsay, you seem to be suggesting that the reason for having the five representatives from education and training is to make sure their views are represented, each sector, and that is not what we're after. We're after their considered opinion on the kinds of programs that are going to be designed and delivered by OTAB. They're on the board representing the sector as a whole for that purpose, and not that they're going to be there to say, "This is what our sector can do to provide the training programs that are being considered."

Mr Ramsay: But hold on, now. Again, this is in the bill, but you've said this, that they're there only basically to hear about the courses that OTAB is going to design and deliver. Are you telling me that OTAB will itself deliver programs that the community colleges once delivered, or the school board or the universities or the private trainers once delivered? These folks are going to be still the deliverers of services.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think we were over this ground yesterday, Mr Ramsay, but in any case, the idea is not that OTAB will be delivering the programs. Already we have the structure in place, and that structure will be used of necessity, not only by OTAB but by private industry in separation from OTAB. It's still very much needed. So OTAB will not be taking that over.

If you recall from yesterday, on the delivery of programs, one of the main areas would be consultation, advice on how training can be improved, for instance, and that is obviously an area that the directors would have some views on.

Again, we think this is the right balance for the governing board.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chairman, I have no more comments right now. We have, I think, four other motions dealing with the makeup of the directorship, and I'll reserve further comments for a later date.

The Vice-Chair (Mr Bob Huget): Thank you.

Mrs Cunningham: I just want to add to the record some concerns of groups we've heard from in the last couple of days, and I know that my colleagues have received the same correspondence we've received.

This one was filed with the clerk on February 19. It's from the Ontario Association of Youth Employment Centres. I feel it's necessary that I put some of their concerns on the record. "Education/training steering committee presentation to standing committee on resource development on Bill 96, an Act to Establish OTAB."

They basically talk about the education-training sector as being one of the four key labour market partners preparing for the implementation of OTAB, and so they're talking about four key labour market partners. They go on to say that during the established tradition of participation and cooperation, they identified a number of concerns that they share as a steering committee.

The first one is that "the legislation has been drafted in isolation from an overall provincial policy on labour force development and lifelong learning." The second point they made is that "the legislation does not adequately deal with the issues of accountability and openness." We'll have a further opportunity to make amendments to assist in this regard. The third point they make is that "education and trainers are not adequately recognized as key players in the development and implementation of future labour force training and adjustment."

1450

I think they say it better than any of us because they are the people who in fact have studied the legislation from their point of view, with regard to their participation through representation on the OTAB board. They also are people who have been responsible, in my view, for most of the training that has gone on in Ontario in the past. I think I made that point in my opening comments on Monday afternoon, that we're not going to leave the training in the hands of the educators who have had to take upon their shoulders this tremendous responsibility alone, not any more.

I find it ironic, given that they have in fact been responsible for the education and training in this province, whether we're talking about our young people, retraining, adult education, English as a second language, apprenticeship training, all of the programs that go on in our colleges and our universities, I find it irresponsible that the government talks about the two key partners in training in the province being business and labour.

We received a deputation in writing from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation at the end of last week. I'm sure you've all had an opportunity to look at that. We're not able to make all of the amendments that they recommended because we had to take them into consideration along with the amendments that were suggested by other educators and trainers, so we put our best minds together over the weekend and tried to come up with a solution for the government.

We are quite frankly appalled that, after these public hearings, the government itself did not see fit to bring forth its own amendments, and if at the end of the afternoon we do in fact finish section 9 with no recognition of the importance of education and trainers, who should be the third major partner in this whole process, I'm certain that the government will not have the kind of support it needs to implement the training programs in this province.

Again, I have said before that this whole process, the one that we're involved in now, is a joke. If you've made up your minds based on inputs that you received before we began these public hearings, then I think you've done a great disservice to the citizens of this province who want to, to the best of their ability, partake in an open public consultation. For a government that said it would openly consult, unlike former governments, in their opinion, I can tell you that former governments are looking better every day. This has not been a consultation process; this has been a farce. One amendment.

I see the member Mr Klopp has joined us. Paul, you would have been so disgusted had you been here on the first day of these hearings to hear the government bring

forth one amendment after three weeks of public hearings. In one section alone that we discussed yesterday, there were 76 suggestions for amendments, and the government brought forth one.

I just know that the county of Huron will be most interested, including its school board, in the deliberations of this committee, and I hope that that member, who happens to be particularly well liked within his riding, doesn't support this government. I know from the people who have discussed this with me that that member has been most sympathetic to the public who have come before this committee, as has the member for Oxford, whom I will remind. I cannot believe a person of his youth and his energy is accepting the old way of doing things.

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): I'm not.

Mrs Cunningham: This is worse than the old way of doing things.

Mr Chairman, you are being very patient in view of the rest of us in listening to my comments, because they do represent the frustration of the community of Ontario. I can tell you right now that up until yesterday, it was \$53,000—I don't know how much more money it'll cost in the next few days—but this has been a joke.

Having put my complementary comments on the record on behalf of the public that I think all of us are suppose to represent, I can only say that this parliamentary assistant I cannot believe is regurgitating the directions of the minister who hasn't had an opportunity to look at any of this. Luckily, I'll be asking him tomorrow when I have an opportunity to speak to him. But whoever put the gag on him has, in my view, done a great disservice not only to the new minister but to the members who are sitting on this committee. It's too bad.

We did try for the tripartite, a truly balanced approach, by increasing the number of business directors from seven to nine and the number of labour directors from seven to nine. We included five directors representing educators and trainers: one to represent specifically school boards, one for community colleges, one for universities, one for private sector trainers and one for community-based trainers. We included, as the government had already included, one director representing francophones, one director representing persons with disabilities, one director representing racial minorities and one director representing women.

The intent of the government that there be nine directors representing business and nine directors representing labour, we have not changed. We have tried to show respect, although we don't agree with them that the two major trainers, in their opinion, are labour and business. We knew we wouldn't have a hope of changing their minds on that, but we did think that they would give some appreciation and consideration to the increased number of directors in the area of education.

So I think perhaps this motion will not be successful—surprise, surprise—but perhaps on the next attempt or the following one where we are looking at first of all five directors representing education and trainers, then four and then three, indeed we may get some support. Mr Chairman, I would be prepared, if you are, and of course I shall ask

your direction and advice, to ask you to call the question on subsection 9(2) as we have presented the amendment.

The Chair: Thank you kindly. It really is a matter of whether or not there is any further debate. Is there any further debate regarding Mrs Cunningham's motion?

All in favour of Mrs Cunningham's motion please indicate? Opposed? Mrs Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham now moves that section 9 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"(2.1) One of the directors representing business and one of the directors representing labour shall be designated as co-chairs."

Is that correct, Mrs Cunningham?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, and I would move that section 9 of the bill be amended to reflect such.

The Chair: Do you want to speak to that, please?

Mrs Cunningham: I don't think I'll belabour this because it really has to fit with the part that was just defeated, so I will simply say that we were trying to be consistent with the government in this regard. I'm sure that they will have to go along with it since it is exactly what they're saying. That's all I have to say.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. All those in favour of Mrs Cunningham's motion, please indicate? Opposed? Mrs Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham: We're back to the original concept so if the members are looking at subsection 9(2) of the bill—

The Chair: I understand that you have a motion that affects subsection 9(2).

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, I do. But I'm just trying to point out to my colleagues on the committee that we're really just changing the total number by changing paragraph 4. In fact this motion is exactly the same as the Liberal motion.

The Chair: Will you please make the motion, though?

Mrs Cunningham: No, wait a minute. I'm sorry. It isn't. There is a difference.

The Chair: Go ahead and make the motion so we can discuss it.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm just wondering if it would be appropriate that—before I make my motion could I ask for direction from you? Could we deal with this section or with my motion, the PC motion option 2? I actually think we should be dealing with the Liberal motion at this point in time. I think if you're looking at consistency, I should stand all of them down because I think that the Liberal motion is more inclusive, trying to do the same things. I think actually it's a more inclusive motion, but that's up to you.

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The Chair: Okay. I have decided that this motion should be called before the Liberal motion which amends subsections 9(2) and (3). However, if there's unanimous consent in that regard, we can stand down this and your notice of motion option 3 and your notice of motion option 4 and your motion dealing with subsection 9(3), which should logically follow the Liberal motion. So your three options, 2, 3 and 4, by unanimous consent be stood down

until the Liberal motion amending subsections 9(2) and (3)—is there unanimous consent in that regard? Thank you very much. Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to thank Mrs Cunningham for standing down her motions temporarily. We can deal with this. They're basically in substance dealing with the same issue of trying to bring a better balance to the board of directors of OTAB. As I said before, it's going to be very important for the credibility of this organization. In order for it to work, it'll have to be credible in the eyes of all the partners, and all the partners there are going to have to feel they've got fair representation and their voices are being heard. I'm very concerned especially about the educators, that they be there.

I'd like to stress to Mr Wilson and the other government representatives that I accept fully the government's argument that labour and business have to be the driving force of OTAB. There's no doubt about it. We don't want bureaucrats. We don't want the educators. We don't want the equity groups dominating OTAB, but they need to be there. It's particularly important that the people who historically have and I believe who historically will provide training to working men and women in Ontario are on that board for two-way communication. I think they need to be there to understand, and maybe in some cases for the first time, really what the needs are out there from working people and from businesses.

I think in the past maybe our educators haven't been as well in touch, and in fact that's what you're trying to do with OTAB. You're trying to get everybody together so everybody's singing from the same book, understands what the needs are, and that's right and I applaud that. I think you need all the providers there. I think they have to be there, but they shouldn't dominate.

That's why, when you respond to this amendment, please keep in mind that I'm also tackling with an amendment how voting will happen on the board because that's important. You have to look at them as being coupled because I don't want to distort what you're trying to do here and have the client drive the system. I want you to please appreciate that.

But I think it's important that if the providers and customers are in sync, all the providers need to be at the table. If you don't have them at the table, and even though you've got the reference group, the perception is going to be that actually the people sitting at the table are going to have a leg up on the others and you're going to start to develop some suspicions. There are going to start to be some breakdowns in that reference group and that could start to precipitate the failure of OTAB. None of us want that to happen. I think if you have everybody there, you can head that one off at the pass, and I think that's very important.

So the only change there from the section that's in the bill is that I am recommending that you increase the representatives of the education training sector from two to five by adding the three who don't find themselves at the table under your model. The rest is exactly the same as you have proposed, and I truly believe this would bring some equity while at the same time not distort the say that the clients,

who are in this case business and labour, should have with the OTAB board.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. I notice we have Mr Hansen joining us, who's a member of the Legislative Assembly. Although not a member of this committee, of course under the standing orders he has the right to attend this committee and to participate.

As Chair, I intend to give effect to those rights; they're fundamental to concepts of democracy that should prevail here. Any member of the Legislature exercising those rights should be not only permitted but encouraged to participate in the committee that he's attending. I recognize that and I trust that any other fairminded or democratically minded member of this Legislature, especially when sitting as a Chair of a committee, would do the same.

Mr Hansen, do you have any comments on Mr Ramsay's motion?

Mr Ron Hansen (Lincoln): No, I don't, but I was just wondering what had happened to all the diet pop.

The Chair: Thank you very much. Mr Wilson, do you want to respond, please?

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you very much, Mr Kormos. Again—

The Chair: One moment. Mr Hansen, do you know what Mr Ramsay's motion was?

Mr Hansen: No, I don't.

The Chair: Thank you. Go ahead, Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, I'd like to say that this legislation was written after extensive consultation with the labour market partners, including the educators and trainers. As I mentioned earlier, it was the first in many cases that they came together with other representatives of the sector. We think that this is a good beginning to the kind of cooperation that will highlight the interest that their two directors would bring to the table and that the split among the directors that we've come to is a well-balanced one that will work well because of the size of it.

Again, this is a consumer-driven model that we're proposing and having the business and labour taking the lead with the education and training sector being there predominantly in an advisory role, we think, will lead to the best design of the programs because the people who need them will be leading the way towards those programs.

Another thing that was pointed out in some of the presentations is that there is broad experience for education and training throughout the community, that the directors will come with the larger provincial interest in mind and they already can draw on experience; that is, that both business and labour having training programs of their own, for instance. They have experience with it. Certainly it's possible that the directors who represent the other groups will have education or training background, that they will have some knowledge of what is there and what the interests are in that sector.

But, generally, we think that providing for two directors to speak for the sector will make sure that it is well represented. There is the reference group that will be providing information to the directors and making sure that they

are in touch with what the sector needs. We expect too that it will be largely consensus based, that it will be based on the views of everyone who's at the table to make sure that it works.

One of the things that has been repeatedly brought to the committee is that the training system isn't working now. There's some urgency to bring reform to the training programs in Ontario. This is what OTAB is doing. This is the thing that will keep it on track, to make sure that the programs will be meeting the needs of business and labour. We expect that all the people who are sitting around that table will be working to that end and the consensus will be the main way of deciding what should be done. Again, we think the split that we have—the eight, eight, four, two—represents the best way of meeting the needs of the people who need training in the province.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Wilson, you said that really the educators have agreed to the two seats, but that hasn't been my experience in the three weeks here that I listened to educators come before us. Several of them—and of course it's documented here in our researcher's compilation of all the comments—several groups representing various trainers made suggestions. OSSIF said there should be three seats from educator trainers, and various different groups have said increase it up to four.

Various groups in the training education community have asked for more seats, so there's certainly not the unanimity that you have said is out there. In fact the only reason the reference group came up with the two was because basically you coerced them to have two because that's what you've said in the bill. Thou shalt only be allowed two is what your bill says, so they've nominated two from the reference group out of five, but they're not happy with that.

1510

The other point is that you're looking at the education community as a monolith, as if, "Well, you've got two out of the five." Basically these people, because they're in the training education business, kind of all think the same, but as you saw from all the various groups that came before us, they each have their individual and special perspectives on training and education.

I think in order for OTAB to have the best opportunity to be successful and to flourish, they need to hear all the different perspectives as to how education can be brought forward to people, how people can be taught and how people can learn. Each of these groups is successful in its own right, teaching various different types of clients, in different types of ways, in different types of settings using different educational methods to impart information.

Without giving these people any more power, and I don't want to do that because again it's not a power thing, I think you want to have the OTAB but, as importantly, all those people who won't be doing this full time on the LTABs really exposed to all the various advice and perspectives that all the trainers have and then they can make up their minds which way they want to go.

Whether it's going to be a private trainer or community college that's going to give that meat-cutting course or whatever it is, they'll best understand that but only if

they're armed with knowledge. Only if they hear all the perspectives as to what training's about and the different perspectives from the different types of trainers.

I just think it's good to have them there, and it's also good to have them there so that these people will understand what the business community wants and what workers need. So they'll start to fine-tune and tailor their courses that they're putting on, wherever they may be, to better fit the marketplace so that it is driven by those people you and I agree should drive the system, workers and business.

Gee, I just really don't think this is a big deal. I'm not giving them the power, but I want them there to hear. I want them there to understand and to learn what's being required by the people who drive the economy, and that's the workers and business. That's why I want them there. I think it's important for them to be there to understand that, so we'll have good training.

The Chair: Ms Witmer and then Mr Offer, please.

Mrs Witmer: I'm going to have a question first for Mr Wilson. Mr Wilson, I would just ask you, is part of the government reluctance to reshape the size of the board of directors a result of the business community and the labour community having been asked to select their numbers, their seven already?

Mr Gary Wilson: No, that's not it.

Mrs Witmer: So there have been no discussions with either business or labour in terms of requests to nominate directors to this board?

Mr Gary Wilson: That has been part of the discussion, the consultation, but that's not what's driving the model that we've evolved for OTAB. It's again that we think the leadership should come from those who need the training rather than those who supply it, and that's the reason we have the split that we have.

Mrs Witmer: I hear you saying, though, that there has been some consultation with business and labour already as to their selecting representatives. I would just ask you at this time, in dealing with those two groups of people, are they being asked in any way to make sure that their representatives would be similar to what the government is aiming for in the area of employment equity? Would there be a request for a visible minority female native? Is this the type of request the government would be making?

Mr Gary Wilson: They're well aware that they are government appointees through order in council and the appointees will come with that in mind, to reflect the diversity of Ontario.

Mrs Witmer: So the seven people will reflect that diversity. Okay. Who will be then giving—

Mr Gary Wilson: I should say the seven appointees will reflect that diversity.

Mrs Witmer: Right. I would understand you then to be saying that obviously if the business community and labour community were making appointments and they weren't acceptable, they'd have to go back and look for other individuals. Is that right?

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, the appointees will be made by the government and it's our responsibility to make sure that the appointees will represent—

Mrs Witmer: Reflect.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes—the diversity of Ontario.

Mrs Witmer: Okay. So then probably, although we have on this board already, for example, a place for someone with disabilities and racial minorities and women, we'll also see that type of composition within the seven directors from business and from labour?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's possible, but we'll have to see who the appointees are. Again it is an order in council and that is part of the procedure in that regard.

Mrs Witmer: I understand there have been discussions and many of these decisions already are well on their way to having been made, which I think is unfortunate, because I think again it demonstrates that our sitting here this week and being paid, the taxpayers paying us, really is a complete sham and it's not unlike Bill 40.

But I'd like to go back to the educational representation. I am just aghast that the government has been so unresponsive to the numerous presentations that were made by the educational and the training community regarding their request for greater representation on the board.

I think I said before that currently we have many valuable training programs taking place that are offered by our school boards, and I mentioned the four different boards. I talked about the community colleges and the universities, the private sector trainers and the community-based trainers. I have to tell you, from my own personal experience, having been a trustee and chair of a school board and having worked with community colleges, universities and trainers, those people and those groups are very separate entities. They also have a tremendous knowledge base, vast experience, and I can't believe that we would not use that infrastructure that is already in place and increase their representation from two to five.

It really, for me, raises some very serious questions about how effective and efficient OTAB is going to be if the partners who have been involved thus far are not going to really be involved in this very, very vital process. As I said before, I really think we need to use the expertise and the experience of the people and of these groups, and I want to stress again that they are diverse groups. They don't have much in common.

If we take a look at what the government is proposing for labour, you'd have seven people from the OFL. Right there, you've got seven people who will always vote the same, have similar aims and objectives, but I can tell you within the educational community the five groups I've mentioned come from very different experiences, backgrounds, knowledge base and interests.

I just find it unbelievable that the expertise and the infrastructure that we already have in this province is not going to be utilized by this government. As I say, it really raises the question for me as to the effectiveness and the efficiency of this OTAB board to not use that demonstrated record.

The Chair: Mr Offer, please.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): I have a question, if I might, to the parliamentary assistant. On this amendment, and even not on this amendment, how can you argue that these groups should not be part of the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: Which groups are you referring to, Mr Offer?

Mr Offer: We know that there are five groups within the educators and trainers category. We know that under the legislation they will have two seats. What is the response to the many people who have said, "How could they not be part of the board?"

Mr Gary Wilson: The response is in two parts: One is, as I was saying, what we see is important here is that the people who need the training should be leading it and not those who are supplying it. Second, they are represented on the board through two directors who will be representing that sector, as well as the reference group that will be supplying them with the information they need, as well as how things are working out as far as the training programs and their design goes. We think that the group is well represented in the role that it is to play on OTAB.

1520

Mr Offer: Let me just tell you, the five groups, as you know, school boards, colleges, universities, community trainers, private trainers, each have a certain community of interest within themselves. They certainly, as everyone does, share a common goal, but they all have their own particular interest as to how to reach that goal, each of which is extremely important in terms of meeting the training and adjustment demands of tomorrow.

How is it that the government would specifically decide that of those five groups, three will of necessity have to be excluded? Don't talk to me about reference committees, okay? I believe that to be nothing more than a mere puff. I don't believe that they're going to be taken in or conscripted. These groups—we're not talking about reference committees—they wanted a seat. They want to be part of the direction. How is it that you say no to three of school boards, colleges, universities, community trainers or private trainers?

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, the directors are not there representing their own interests. This applies to directors from all of the labour market partners, not just from the educators and trainers. They're representing their sector as well as the public interest, so in that regard they are there to bring the views of the whole sector which, in spite of what you say, Mr Offer, the reference group will have a very strong influence on and provide crucial information to. The system will work, or the success of the system will be the kind of training that is provided to the people who need it, and this is what will keep it on track.

Mr Offer: Again, in speaking in support of this amendment, I think we have to go back to the words of the minister when this started:

"Bill 96 recognizes the critical importance of the two labour market partners, business and labour, playing a leading role in OTAB as lead partners, but that is also why this partnership includes women, racial minorities, people

with disabilities, francophones, educators and trainers and aboriginal people if they wish to participate."

It is clearly in the mind of the minister that OTAB should be a partnership which includes the educators and trainers. We have five groups that make up educators and trainers. We have two on the board, we have three excluded. There will be no consensus, because if someone is not at the table to agree, then you can't have consensus. What you will have is a dictate, and unless one can understand that it is crucially important for representatives of the five sectors of educators and trainers to be at the table to share their thoughts as to the direction that should be followed, there will of necessity be an alienation of interests, and it will not be in keeping with what is hoped to be the success of OTAB. This will be the land-mine of OTAB.

So I would ask that the government seriously consider how it can possibly justify excluding 60% in terms of representation of educators and trainers in this province, how you can shut the door in their faces to them on a board that you hope will be a great success? It can't be a success unless you bring them all in. It can't be a success unless you have the school boards, the colleges, the universities, the private trainers in the community all sitting with business and labour as well as the other equity groups.

We're not asking for a board of 750 people, we're asking for a board where there are clearly five interested parties in educators and trainers. You can't shut the door on three, representing hundreds of thousands if not millions of people in this province. They have every right to be there and to share their thoughts with the group, and hopefully to arrive at a consensus.

I ask anyone here, would you be part of a consensus of a decision of which you were not a member to, a participant of? Would you be? Is that consensus for any member here? Consensus of decision? Well, no. If we can't bring it down here, then how can we expect others? Consensus for decision-making is when you are part of the decision. It may not be in the end exactly what you wanted, but you at least have the opportunity to express your thoughts, and maybe some of them were taken, maybe a portion were taken, but you were part of it.

Think about a decision which you were a part of and think about a decision which you were not a part of, one of which you read about, the other of which you are part of. Consensus is where you are part of it; dictate is when you are not part of it. Think about that. It is not a land-mine type of amendment to accept; it is one that, if not accepted, will be a land-mine for OTAB in terms of its decisions.

Just think about that. How can you expect these groups to accept a consensual approach if they were not at the table when you wouldn't do it yourself? There is no one here who would accept that for themselves. Why should we expect others to do what we wouldn't do in our personal lives? Three additions, that's what it will take.

I'm in support of the amendment. I think if this amendment is accepted it will at least move towards a hope that consensus can be achieved. When people are excluded it is very difficult, if not impossible, and in principle flawed in arriving at consensus.

The Chair: Mr Ramsay, please.

Mr Ramsay: I'd like to ask Mr Wilson, of the two representatives who have been decided upon to represent education, colleges and school boards, which one of those is going to speak on behalf of the private training community?

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said earlier, Mr Ramsay, the responsibility of the directors on the board is not to speak for a sector in particular, but it's to represent the views of the sector they come from as a whole as in what the educators and trainers represent as a totality.

As I said, we expect that the nominees who will come forward from this group will have that in mind. After all, they're going to be nominated by the five in total, and I would say that this already represents the degree of consensus that can be reached among the group. We heard in the hearings how surprised some of them were that there was the commonality of interest that they didn't realize was there until they came together.

I would say too from what we heard that they are very concerned about the training structure in the province and want to get on with a training that does meet the needs of the people who need training, and that is a part of the reason that they are working within the system and part of the reason everyone is trying to get the system under way as soon as possible with the kind of structure that we have proposed in the legislation.

Mr Ramsay: So you're telling me that the college representative will be on the board and she will say, "Listen, I think the colleges could provide a lot of what OTAB's talking about today, and by the way, maybe the private trainers could do a better job in a lot of courses, so maybe we should go speak to them." Or the person is going to say: "You know, really the colleges could supply all the answers that we need for training today. Let's forget about those private trainers. They're just greedy entrepreneurs and maybe we should be funding the public school system. In fact that's what it says here in the bill, that actually you've got to be listening to me more. That's what the bill says, that you and OTAB have to be making sure that you seek to ensure the strength of the publicly funded school system. The private trainers are not here."

1530

I think the colleges—and I've worked in colleges and really believe in them, so I think that's where we need to be going. I just don't understand where you're excluding such different voices within that community. Again, you look at it as a monolith. I don't see how people who have been put forward by their particular communities will not have a vested interest for that community. It would almost be irresponsible for them to do it. I don't see how the community person is going to be talking up to the private trainer at the board level. I just don't see that happening. How are those other folks going to have a chance to have a say?

Mr Gary Wilson: I don't know about you, Mr Ramsay, but I've certainly spoken with people from the community colleges in my riding and I know that they're well aware of the diversity of training in our community by itself and how each sector is important in meeting training needs.

They are well aware of the strength of the various areas in education and training.

Beyond that, it wasn't only the private trainers who came forward telling us of the strength of their sector, but there were other representatives from all the labour market partners in fact who pointed out the strength of diversity of education and training in Ontario.

Mr Ramsay: You're really going to cut out three of the five of that strength, because you're right, the strength is in the diversity of it, that we haven't put our eggs in one basket in this province and it is a very diverse training community out there. We have basically cut three of them out.

Mr Gary Wilson: They're not cut out at all, because they will be represented by the two directors who are going to have not only their own individual sector in mind but also the diversity of the educational training sector, and then there will be the reference groups, plus the other directors who are aware of the diversity.

Mr Ramsay: Excuse me, what reference group are you referring to?

Mr Gary Wilson: Each of the partners will have a reference group.

Mr Ramsay: Where does it say that in the act? Can you point that out, please? You might want to check clause 30(i).

Mr Gary Wilson: It's section 20.

Mr Ramsay: What does 20 say?

Mr Gary Wilson: "Reference committees may be established, in accordance with the regulations made under this act, by the groups named in subsection 9(2) and section 10."

Mr Ramsay: You say they "may" be established?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

Mr Ramsay: So there may not be reference groups.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'll let Kathleen Beall explain that.

Ms Kathleen Beall: I'd just like to provide some legal assistance to the committee on this particular question, the question being why subsection 20(1) says reference groups "may be established" as opposed "shall be established."

If it were to say that reference groups "shall be established," that would be a legislative duty that would be mandated by the legislation, but there's no particular individual identified upon whom this duty falls. Would it be all business people in Ontario must get together to establish a reference group? Or must all francophones get together to establish the reference group?

Because you cannot identify the particular individuals to whom the duty applies, it's inappropriate to define it as a duty, to describe it as a duty. That is why it's written out as a "may" as opposed to a "shall." It enables the creation of reference groups but, for legal reasons, it's not appropriate to make it an obligation because there are no individuals upon which this obligation can be identified.

Mr Ramsay: Okay. Then if it can't be an obligation, why not put them on there in the first place then and we won't have to worry about it.

Mr Gary Wilson: I don't understand.

Mr Ramsay: Since you can't make it obligatory for legal reasons that you must establish the reference group, then just let's put on three other trainers to begin with and we wouldn't have to worry about that reference group. We wouldn't have a problem. They're there. They have a full say and yet, if you look at some other amendments, we don't give them power, but they have input and they can listen.

Mr Gary Wilson: Are you saying do away with the reference groups?

Mr Ramsay: No. What I'm saying is your legal assistant is telling me that because of legalities you can't make it obligatory because you can't identify who these people are to establish a reference group. If we can't do that and so you're not giving the people certainty that there's going to be a reference group, why don't we just put them on in the first place and we wouldn't have to worry about it. They're there. They have full input on the board.

Mr Gary Wilson: The other labour market partners are going to have a reference group as well. It isn't only the educators and trainers. They're there to provide the advice and they will be set up through the regulations to provide that advice so that the deliberations of OTAB can be as inclusive as possible.

Mr Ramsay: Let me suggest you've got a big problem here, because you're promising something to these various representatives that your legislation, from what you're telling me, cannot deliver. I thought it was just that you wouldn't deliver it, but now you're telling me you can't deliver it. I don't know why. You've made a motion saying that OTAB shall establish LTABs. I don't know why OTAB shall not establish some reference groups in consultation with the people who need to be represented on those reference groups. I don't know why you can't make that mandatory so that at least these people have some certainty that there will be a reference group for them.

Mr Gary Wilson: Legal counsel's already explained why it has to be that way. The consultation with the labour market partners has shown that this is the way it will work to the best advantage.

Mr Offer: Just a question based on the exchange with my colleague Mr Ramsay: The difference between the business and labour sectors and the reference groups is that business and labour are represented on the board. The essence of this amendment is speaking to three sectors within educators and trainers which are agreed upon, which are visible, which are understandable, which have been identified. Three of five are not going to be on the board.

We have now heard from legal counsel that there is a difficulty, in terms of the reference committees, to make it mandatory within legislation. We are not talking about reference groups or committees of people who have a say on the board; we are talking about the 60% of the groups that do not have a say, the three of five that will not be put on the board and cannot be put on the board because of the legislation.

If we can't use the reference committees, then we must look at the board. We have five identifiable groups. We

have two seats. The question is, what argument could possibly be made that the other three should not have a seat on the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think we've already made the argument that leadership on OTAB will be made by those who need training, not by those who supply it, that there are two directors who will be speaking for the educator-trainer sector, and that there already has been good consultation among the education and training sector and there's a lot of agreement there already. We expect the two directors can speak very effectively for the whole sector in cooperation with the reference group.

Mr Offer: What happens if you're wrong? There's nothing substantive that has been decided yet; there's nothing on the table; there's no issue. What happens if on a matter that's decided by OTAB, the universities and private trainers and community trainers decide, "Well, wait a minute; the colleges and school boards were on that and they made a decision; we disagree with that; that's going to hurt us"? What do they do?

Mr Gary Wilson: There's no question that the effectiveness of OTAB will be the value of the programs it delivers, and we all expect that, but through consultation we have come up with this model that we expect will work the best.

Mr Ramsay: I think you answered with the wrong answer there. I'd like to ask Mr Wilson on other aspects of the representation here, is it possible, for instance, the way this is written, that the one director representing women doesn't necessarily have to be a woman, I take it?

Mr Gary Wilson: I would expect it does, yes.

Mr Ramsay: Where does it say that? Also one director representing racial minorities: It doesn't necessarily have to be somebody who represents directly, in a direct sense, by being a racial minority.

Mr Gary Wilson: These groups could choose to have somebody other than—in the case of women, women could choose to have somebody other than a woman, and that would be taken into consideration.

Mr Ramsay: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: All those in favour—

Mr Offer: Recorded vote, please.

The Chair: Recorded vote. All those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion please indicate and keep your hand raised until your name is called by the Chair.

Ayes

Cunningham, Offer, Ramsay, Witmer.

The Chair: All those opposed to Mr Ramsay's motion please raise your hand and keep your hand raised until your name is called.

Nays

Dadamo, Frankford, Harrington, Huget, Klopp, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands).

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, did you have your hand raised?

Mr Dalton McGuinty (Ottawa South): Yes.

Interjections.

The Chair: Mr Ramsay's motion is defeated. Five-minute recess. Thank you.

The committee recessed at 1541 and resumed at 1549.

The Chair: Okay, we shall resume.

Ms Witmer moves that subsection 9(2) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(2) There shall be 25 directors, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as follows:

"1. Two co-chairs, one representing business and one representing labour.

"2. Seven directors representing business.

"3. Seven directors representing labour.

"4. Five directors representing educators and trainers.

"5. One director representing francophones.

"6. One director representing persons with disabilities.

"7. One director representing racial minorities.

"8. One director representing women."

Is that correct, Ms Witmer? Do you want to speak to that motion?

Mrs Witmer: Absolutely correct. You read so well, Mr Kormos.

The Chair: I do. Before you begin, I do want to acknowledge the presence of Mr Morrow, member of the Legislative Assembly for Wentworth East, who, of course, while not a member of the committee, is entitled as of right to attend at these committee hearings and to participate. I, as Chair of this committee, recognize the standing orders that permit him to do so and I perceive those standing orders not only to permit but to go further and indeed believe that Chairs should encourage and facilitate the participation of non-members who are MLAs in committee process. Mr Morrow is welcome not only to sit at this committee table—that is his right and obligation as a member of the Legislative Assembly—but in the interest of fairness and democracy I invite and encourage Mr Morrow to participate. He is, of course, entitled to speak. He need only raise his hand and I shall give him and afford him as much time as is necessary. I trust that any other Chair of any committee would accord any MLA the same, again in the interest of fairness and democracy. Sorry to interrupt, Ms Witmer.

Mrs Witmer: That's okay, Mr Kormos. Actually, I thought you were going to put on the public record that Mr Mulroney had resigned today and make that particular announcement. In fact, the Premier made some very kind remarks regarding Mr Mulroney and I thought it was most appropriate that he put aside the political hat and make some other comments.

Anyway, this motion that we have before us basically is the same motion as has been put forward by Mr Ramsay. I would just like to call the vote. I don't think there's anything else to say at this particular time.

Mr Gary Wilson: Before you call the vote—

The Chair: Yes, sir.

Mr Gary Wilson: —again, I'd like to reiterate some of the discussion that we've had, just to make sure that it's

understood what it is that we're trying to achieve here. As you know, we see it that the direction of OTAB should come from those who need the training, rather than the providers. That is why we've set up the structure as we have with two directors representing the educators and trainers.

As I guess we've gone on in at some length in earlier discussions, we think that the two representatives of that sector can do a very good job of bringing the views of the whole sector to the table. It comes in part from the discussion that we had in the hearings where, if you recall, some of the presenters expressed their surprise about the commonality of interests that was shown when the groups were brought together to discuss their role on OTAB.

So, again, I think that the list of directors that we have is the appropriate one in the circumstances.

The Chair: Thank you. All those in favour of Ms Witmer's motion please indicate. Opposed? Ms Witmer's motion is defeated.

Ms Witmer moves that subsection 9(2) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(2) There shall be 24 directors, appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as follows:

"1. Two co-chairs, one representing business and one representing labour.

"2. Seven directors representing business.

"3. Seven directors representing labour.

"4. Four directors representing educators and trainers.

"5. One director representing francophones.

"6. One director representing persons with disabilities.

"7. One director representing racial minorities.

"8. One director representing women."

Is that correct, Ms Witmer? Do you want to speak to that motion?

Mrs Witmer: Absolutely correct, Mr Kormos. Again, I will just be very brief. Again, we are trying to be responsive to the many, many people who have made representation to this committee and who indicated very strongly that there is a need for greater education and training representation on OTAB. They're looking for the board composition to be revised and to include and to increase education and training representation. What we've asked for here is that we have at least four directors. If the government does not see fit to have five, one from each of these sectors—the school boards, the universities, the colleges, the private trainers and the community trainers—we would ask them to give very, very serious consideration to including four directors, as opposed to only two.

I think the comments that have been made this afternoon by Mr Ramsay, Mrs Cunningham and myself, certainly indicate that there will not be fair representation, that the expertise of the educational and training committee is not going to be utilized if we have only two representatives. It is unfortunate that the infrastructure that's in place today is not going to be used in the future. It's unfortunate that people who have a demonstrated record of providing training and retraining are not going to be real partners in this vital process and in the composition of the OTAB board. I would encourage the government to give very serious consideration

to increasing the representation for education and trainers to four directors representing those groups.

Mr Ramsay: I would like to say that I had supported the initial third-party motion that asked the government to place five directors representing the educators and trainers on the board, and their option 2, which also did the same.

But to be consistent with my motion and my thinking about this, I would find it difficult to support this option 3, because I would be put in a position to now exclude some of the educators whom I've just fought for in the last few minutes, and I don't want to dilute my position. I fully believe that five of the educators should be there. I'm not trying to play political tricks—"And therefore, if I can't have five, I want four"—I want the five. I think everybody should be there, and I'm sorry that we have to part the ways here, but I feel I cannot support any motion that does not bring all five of the players in training and education to the OTAB board.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

All those in favour of Ms Witmer's motion please indicate. All those opposed? Ms Witmer's motion is defeated.

Ms Witmer moves that subsection 9(2) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(2) There shall be twenty-three directors appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council, as follows:

"1. Two co-chairs, one representing business and one representing labour.

"2. Seven directors representing business.

"3. Seven directors representing labour.

"4. Three directors representing educators and trainers.

"5. One director representing francophones.

"6. One director representing persons with disabilities.

"7. One director representing racial minorities.

"8. One director representing women."

Is that correct, Ms Witmer?

Mrs Witmer: Yes, Mr Kormos.

The Chair: Will you speak to the motion, please.

Mrs Witmer: Again, here we have indicated that if the government is not willing to support five educators and trainers, or four, we would compromise after discussion and debate with the government and we would hope that they would meet us halfway. They have indicated that they would like only two representatives. We believe it was important to have at least five. However, if that was not acceptable, as it was not, then we were looking at four. And again, that was voted down by the government.

I hope that if this really is true consultation that's taking place here, and if we are interested in being responsive to the many voices that made representation to this committee, that we would see fit to at least have three representatives from the educational and training community in order to, again, have that expertise and that experience on the OTAB board.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am.

Mr Ramsay, do the comments you made to the previous motion apply to this one?

Mr Ramsay: Exactly.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

All those in favour of the motion, please indicate. Opposed? The motion is defeated.

Ms Witmer moves that subsection 9(3) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"(3) Each director shall be nominated by organizations representing the group that the director is to represent."

Is that correct, Ms Witmer?

Mrs Witmer: Yes, it is, Mr Kormos. The intent of this particular amendment ensures that each director is nominated by organizations representing the group that the director is to represent. The government, of course, can engage in a consultation process without truly listening to those whom it is consulting with, and I think we've certainly seen that happen in the OTAB deliberations in the recent three weeks. However, in order to make OTAB truly representative of the labour force partners, as Mr Wilson has said continually this week that the government is interested in doing, in making it representative of the labour force partners, we feel that they should be given the responsibility to nominate individuals to the board. The government must not be selecting individuals on their behalf.

1600

I think the Workplace Health and Safety Agency provides a good example for us of how a partnership model can be derailed when the government interferes. After we had a number of business representatives resign, the government indicated that it intended to proceed with a number of appointments that were not acceptable to the many individuals and organizations within the business community.

This whole issue at the Workplace Health and Safety Agency, that process that took place there, where the government put forward appointments that were not acceptable to the business community, really calls into question also whether that's what's going to happen here—the effectiveness of this agency. I would indicate that the problem at the Workplace Health and Safety Agency, I understand, is now in the process of being resolved. However, it was a most unfortunate experience, and it has prevented that agency from effectively doing the job that it was intended to do. So I hope that the government will support us, and that this amendment ensuring that each director is nominated by organizations representing the group that the director is to represent will be supported by the government.

Mr Gary Wilson: I want to point out to you, Ms Witmer, that the legislation now clearly says that "Each director shall be selected in consultation with organizations representing the group that the director is to represent." If the appointments by the government are to be credible, then there has to be this discussion with the organizations that the directors will be representing. That's why, as I say, that has to happen. There has to be the mutual respect that would lead to that kind of credibility. But on the other hand, for the accountability that has to follow, the government must make these appointments.

Mrs Witmer: Well, I don't know how familiar Mr Wilson is with the problem at the Workplace Health and Safety Agency, but I can tell you that the government did unfortunately get involved and it was a result of the

interference that really put that agency offtrack and prevented them from getting the job done on behalf of employees in this province. There was a case here where the government just kind of ramrodded and was intending to proceed with their own appointments, even though those appointments were not supported by the business community. So the whole idea of consultation, although the issue has been resolved, did create a tremendous amount of hardship for people in the province and had a real impact on the safety of employees in this province. I would hope that in order to eliminate that from happening, our amendment would be supported.

Mr Ramsay: I concur with this and in fact it was included in the amendment that I previously moved where I included subsections 9(2) and (3), and at that time chose not to speak to 9(3). But I agree with Ms Witmer that it is important that in order to have accountability, the organizations that seek to be represented on OTAB do nominate, do put forward their own people. I think that's very important, so that the others on the board and the public in general have a sense of the independence of the representatives on the board, and that they're not creatures of any particular government but are truly being brought forward by the people whom they are to represent. I think, again, that if the board is to have credibility, there needs to be accountability and a sense that these people truly represent the organizations from which they come and purport to represent.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. All those in favour of Ms Witmer's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Ms Witmer's motion is defeated.

Mr Ramsay moves that subsection 9(4) be struck out and the following substituted:

"(4) In the selection of directors, the following matters shall be recognized:

1. The importance of ensuring that the representation of business and labour reflect the diversity of the business and labour communities, especially with respect to business size and affiliation with labour organizations.

2. The importance of reflecting Ontario's linguistic duality and the diversity of its population.

3. The importance of ensuring overall gender balance."

Mr Ramsay: If any section of the bill comes to the crux of the matter in regard to how our board members are going to represent their various communities out there, this section really speaks to that. If one could identify the greatest flaw in this particular legislation, it has to be the makeup of the representation on both the labour and business sides. We know that from behind the scenes deals have been cut by this government—it's not spelled out in the legislation, which is too bad—with the Ontario Federation of Labour—I see a member from the government side shaking his head.

Mr George Dadamo (Windsor-Sandwich): David, you see several members.

Mr Ramsay: Okay, then, if they are all shaking their heads, is it not true, and I will ask Mr Wilson, that seven of the eight labour representatives will come from OFL-affiliated unions and one labour rep will come from the Ontario construction trades council?

Mr Gary Wilson: That is true.

Mr Ramsay: Well, I'm not sure why everybody was shaking their heads over there. That to me is a deal cut with the big union of Ontario. That's a deal. In the legislation, though, all it says is that there will be two co-chairs, one representing business and one representing labour, and there'll be seven directors representing labour. It doesn't say organized labour. It doesn't say those seven people are going to come from the OFL. It doesn't say that at all, so a deal has been cut. It's not what's in the legislation.

A deal has been cut, and if there is an Achilles' heel—Achilles' tendon, I think it is, isn't it, colleagues—an Achilles' tendon, a weakness to this—

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): No, you were right the first time.

Mr Ramsay: Was I right the first time? Then I hope Hansard will correct that for me.

I'll forget the alliteration and get right down to the nub of this. If there's a weakness, a flaw to this legislation, it has to be this aspect of the representation of labour and it should be, for clarity, spelled out also for the business side, that it's going to be important for this board to have credibility for all the people it purports to represent, that the people at that board truly represent all the interests of working men and women and all the interests of business people.

With the deal the government has cut with the Ontario Federation of Labour, that will not be possible. It will not be possible because no more than 30% of the workforce in Ontario is represented by organized labour. So statistically it is impossible for these seven directors, seven of the eight, or all eight for that matter, to represent all the working men and women in Ontario. I ask you then, if OTAB is to be the training mechanism for all working men and women in Ontario, how can it purport to be so if it doesn't represent them there?

We previously this afternoon had fights with the parliamentary assistant as to how balanced the OTAB legislation is to make sure that there's fair representation. He has argued with us that it's important to have only two education reps and that it's important to have the equity people because he wants to make this representation as inclusive as possible, but yet when it comes to the labour side it's okay to be exclusive; it's okay to discriminate against those people who, for whatever reason, don't find themselves in an organized setting. Somehow, for just one particular group of people, it's all right for this government to be selective, to be discriminatory. That really is what it is.

1610

Quite frankly, though I understand why the bias is there and where it's coming from, if you really want to make sure that whenever this government ceases to be a government and you want to look back and look at one of your legacies, OTAB could be potentially one of the government's legacies if you built it right. I'm telling you right now, you've got a bum brick here. You've got a bum brick because this brick is not going to give you a solid foundation at all. You've built in a fault in this thing that could blow this thing apart, and this is it.

You have the opportunity today to make sure that the representation from all groups truly represents the population of Ontario. I don't understand the inconsistency here because this government talks about equity, equity in society, equity in the workplace, and I agree with those notions, with those principles; we have to have equity.

In group after group, government organization and business, we don't see the face of Ontario being represented today in the goings on of government and business in Ontario, and we need to help people make that happen, but for some reason when it comes to OTAB and when it comes specifically to the labour representation, it's not important to this government that we reflect the diversity of the labour community, the diversity of the geographic representation that's going to be needed, of the linguistic duality, the population, and that to me is very important.

I would plead on behalf of working men and women in Ontario that if you want this thing to succeed and really be effective for them, make sure they are represented on this board fairly. If you don't, then you have started sowing the seeds of destruction of OTAB because if people don't believe they're represented there, they will not pay heed, they will not be involved, they will not be interested and in fact you may get some people working against this, and that's the last thing we need. We need everybody in Ontario to support this concept. Once it's up and running, whether we agree with it or not, we'd better work with it. If you want people to support it, if you're going to ask for their assistance and their contributions to this, you'd better make sure that the representation is fair. If you do that, people will work with the model you put forward.

But the model you put forward is not fair, is not equitable. It is flawed because you're only representing about 30% of the workforce and you're leaving out vast segments of the economy of this province at OTAB, and that's wrong; plain and simply, that is wrong. You're sowing the seeds of the destruction of this particular board that is going to be so important, because we all agree here that we've got to bring everybody together to work on training and workplace education in Ontario.

I'm just telling you it's a mistake and I'm just going to ask Mr Wilson again, for maybe the 100th time, why is it so important that you give such exclusive representation to a very exclusive and minority group of people in Ontario, when my feeling of this government is that you have an open door, that you want to make sure government agencies are inclusive, that you want to bring everybody in to make it so that people understand you're trying to be the government of all the people. Here you're not. You're not being the government of all the people. You're trying to be a government of only unionized working people. Not only is that not fair but that's wrong, and I'd like to have an explanation why you're proceeding down this path.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd like to repeat, Mr Ramsay, that one of the major points about OTAB is the sharing of responsibility for meeting training needs in the province with the labour market partners. If this responsibility is to be treated seriously, then we must listen to what the labour market partners have to say about their role on OTAB. In working with them and consulting with them, we have to

get agreement that the directors on the board will be working with the responsibility of the interests of all Ontario workplaces in mind, so that regardless of which labour market partner the director represents or comes out of, they will still have this broader responsibility in mind.

To do this most effectively, we will be expecting that the nominees who come forward will represent the diversity of Ontario. Both large and small businesses will be represented. There is the geographic representation, the urban-rural split that will have to be taken into account, and we expect that can be done. Just as on the labour side, the interests of all workers, we think, can be represented by nominees who come from organized labour. But again, the primary responsibility here is the future training needs of Ontario and not any specific sectoral or even workplace related issue.

The fact is that organized labour has a very good record now of advocating on behalf of all workers. We just have to think of things like minimum wage, unemployment insurance and child care to show that working issues are similar. We certainly heard this in this presentations as well, that the issues that affect one worker and another aren't changed by the fact of whether they're organized or not. So we believe that with this kind of model, where the issues that face all workplaces as far as training is concerned are the main responsibility of the directors, they can meet this through the shared responsibility we're proposing.

Mr Ramsay: I will not argue with you that organized workers, union people can speak on behalf of all working people when it comes to those issues you've just highlighted, because I think they do have the interests of all working men and women in Ontario. You just gave me a list of sort of the social issues of the workplace that are very important, in health and safety, day care and all those. You're correct, but that's not what OTAB's about. You might think that looking at the fuzzy purpose clauses you've got written at the beginning, that it is some sort of social agency, but it's not. It's about economics and it's about redeveloping and regrowing and redesigning the economy of Ontario. It's nothing short of that.

Each sector is going to be looked at by OTAB to see how we can make sure that adequate training is there so that we have high-value, high-tech, high-paying jobs in Ontario. Some day, they're going to look, for instance, at the agricultural sector. They're going to look around at the worker reps and they're going to look at the CAW rep there and they're going to look at the Steelworker rep over there, and they're going to keep going down the line and they're going to say, "We really need to get some expertise here from workers on what is going to be needed for the agricultural industry in Ontario so we can position agriculture in Ontario number one in the world to make it highly competitive and high-tech, and we need expertise." A CAW rep will say, "Well, I don't have that expertise in agriculture." How about the Steelworker? "We don't have that expertise."

They're going to go down the line and we're going to find out that with sectors besides agriculture, it's going to be the same thing. We're not going to have the expertise at the table, and that's all I'm talking about. It just so happens

that unfortunately for you in a sense and unfortunately for the people of Ontario, organized labour doesn't represent all the different sectors of the economy. We're not going to get all the expertise of the various different types of work experience at the table, and that's all I'm talking about.

Even if you want, you can load it, as far as I'm concerned, and have it 50% union people even though it's only 30% in the workplace, so that all those equity issues are represented that you care about, and I do also. Let's make sure we have some expertise there from other sectors of the economy. You've put in here, quite frankly, kind of a blue-collar prejudice here. I think all working people have to be represented here.

Why isn't there a professional on here? Professionals are going to have to upgrade too. Just because you've entered one of the professions doesn't mean that you no longer require training and upgrading through your life. We need to make sure that we have all working men and women represented here. We need to make sure that everybody's there. What you've done is you've cut out an incredible number of people involved in various skills and trades of Ontario who, for whatever reason—we won't get into those arguments—don't find themselves in an organized workplace.

1620

That's all I'm arguing with you. Not that unionized people cannot represent all workers on broad issues; they can, and I support that. I'm even saying to you that you can even put more than who they represent out there in the population on the board, but just try to bring some balance, even if it's not total balance and total representation that's fair. At least try to attempt to do it, so at least there's the perception that at least, "Oh, golly gee, you tried," but you haven't even tried; all you've done is stack this, you've loaded it up with just organized labour. You're making a big mistake here because it won't have the credibility, because people will just see this as being a tool of the unions. I'm sure you don't want that to be the perception of OTAB.

I think you'd like to say that we brought everybody together: business, working people, the equity groups and the educators, and we did this as fairly as we could. I'm sure you'd like to have that as the legacy of this government that "We really did, honestly, try to bring everybody together in fair way," not, "We stacked it with our friends," and that's what you've done.

When it comes to something like this, I thought you and the minister said that it shouldn't be partisan, but this is what you've done here; you've really stacked this. I'm telling you, with all the sincerity that I can muster, with all of these representations, you should try to make it fair. If you want it to work, you want to make it fair. You haven't made it fair, and I think you've sown the seeds of the destruction of OTAB and that'll be too bad for all the working men and women out there.

Mrs Witmer: I'd like to speak to the amendment that's been put forward by Mr Ramsay, and certainly, I do share many of the concerns that have been expressed by him.

I guess this government has always talked about equity and the need for fairness. Obviously, if we're going to set up in this province a board to look after training, we need to ensure that the business representatives clearly do reflect the diversity of the communities throughout the province of Ontario, and that they be a combination of big and small and come from northern and southern and all over Ontario.

I'm not that concerned that that might not happen, but I have to tell you I am very concerned about the fact that the government has made a commitment that's going to see organized labour, in particular the Ontario Federation of Labour, play a major role in shaping the province's future training programs.

In fact, almost one third of the seats on the board are going to be controlled by one single organization that has very strong links with the NDP government. I'm concerned about that because the OFL is going to have the seven seats, as has been indicated, and the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario is going to get one.

It's already been stated that organized labour only, and I stress "only," represents one third of the workforce in this province, and of that one third, there's only a small portion that are members of the Ontario Federation of Labour. There are other unions within this province and even those unions are not going to have representation on this particular training board. I guess the biggest question that I have to ask: We talk about representation, we talk about equity, but who is really going to represent the views of the majority of the province's workers?

I believe that if we allow unions, particularly the seven seats for the OFL, when they represent less than one third of the workforce, to hold all the labour's seats, I believe that this is extremely unrealistic. I think it's extremely unfair and I can't believe that the government has not made any allowance—a government that talks about fairness and equity has no representation from the non-unionized majority. Numerous people came to this committee and spoke about that issue.

I'd like to take a quote from the Christian Labour Association of Canada, which stated, "The real concern for all of us should be: Can the OFL and the BTC, in view of their philosophy"—which is certainly unique—"and their track record," which is also unique, "be expected to act evenhandedly and in the best interest of the approximately 65% of Ontario workers who do not belong to these organizations' affiliated unions?"

"Peeling away all the rhetoric about a new era in labour relations, broad consultation, public involvement, cooperation and partnership, what is there on the public record that reassures us that these labour representatives indeed can put self-interest aside"—Well, I would say, as an aside, there is absolutely nothing on the public record that would give us any assurance whatsoever that the OFL is going to put their self-interest aside. They certainly haven't demonstrated that in the past, and I doubt if they're going to demonstrate it in the future. They go on to say, "and have progressive ideas about what it might take for this province to remain as efficient, productive and competitive as it can be in a global economic environment?"

I want you to know that those people who are not represented by unions have selected not to be represented by unions out of choice. In fact, there are people within unions who would not like to be there but have no choice. I am very, very concerned about the representation on the labour side, the seven OFL representatives, and I would really encourage this government to ensure that the representation is changed and that it really does reflect the diversity throughout this province.

Do you know, we had many people come from the Christian community. There's a submission here from an individual, and he says, "Where is the balance of equal representation...of individuals who do not deal with organized labour on a day-to-day basis and consequently do not have the same point of view?" Actually, I'm reading from a submission from William Johnstone in Mississauga, and he goes on to say that he is concerned, and that also he cannot contravene his conscience before God by having anything to do with unionism.

Now, that's his religion, and he believes that: "If OTAB is influenced in the direction of putting training programs, for example apprenticeships, under the control of unions or related associations, the opportunities for obtaining skilled trades licences for myself, my peers and my children are cut off. We will be prevented from obtaining employment in the largest sector of the job market. The prospect of the government proceeding down this path is understandably alarming to me."

He goes on to say, "It is nearly impossible at present for any non-union person to get or keep a job in a unionized environment. But even in the presence of this, a tradesman can still be self-employed under the present system. It appears that even training will now have union involvement, which virtually eliminates even the procurement of a trade by anyone having a conscience against joining himself to organizations...Taken to its full extent, minority concerns may be trampled by huge memberships' or groups' demands or ideas."

I guess I would ask you, Mr Wilson, how do you respond to these people who, because of their conscience and their belief in God, are prevented from union affiliation? How can their freedoms and rights be protected in this province? What guarantee do they have that they're going to have equal opportunity?

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, Ms Witmer, as I tried to make clear in my answer to Mr Ramsay, the training issues that will be addressed by OTAB will affect all workers in all workplaces, and again the directors will be coming there with that in mind, so that at least on training issues they will be coming up with the best programs to meet the needs of Ontario workers. That is where the main driving force for the success of OTAB comes from, the need to make sure that the training programs are reformed, because they aren't doing the job that has to be done now.

You might recall during the committee hearings I asked somebody who could be seen, I think, as an impartial observer, Noah Meltz, now principal at Woodsworth College, I think it is, whether he thought the composition of the board would work, that is, seeing business and labour as having the leading positions on it, and he said,

"It has to work." I think that's the important thing, that it has to work, because we need training that will meet the needs of today's workers now. That's the whole issue of setting up the board in this way, so that we can share responsibility to meet those needs.

1630

Mrs Witmer: You haven't answered my question. What guarantees are there for individuals who, because of their belief in God, are preventing from joining unions or having anything to do with unions?

We know that at the present time individuals who are not part of unions are prohibited from bidding on different jobs. There isn't freedom in this province, there isn't equality, and this bill is only going to make that worse for people today. There are going to be fewer opportunities. What assurance do you give these people that they will not be discriminated against?

The Chair: That question was put to the parliamentary assistant. You can decline to answer it if you wish, because Mr Sutherland wants to talk.

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, I'll reiterate that the directors are going to be bound to come up with training programs that will work for all workplaces in Ontario, and that's where people will not be discriminated against. But I think Mr Sutherland—

The Chair: Mr Sutherland sure does.

Mr Sutherland: Sure. If I could just comment on the issue Ms Witmer brought up, because I had representatives of the group who appeared before the committee come and meet me personally in my riding office and discuss the issue. We got into a fairly thorough discussion about it. It should be mentioned that while they presented at the committee that they can't be members of unions, they can't be members of associations in general, so it applies also to business associations.

I asked them whether they had membership worldwide. They indicated they did. They have membership in countries where this model has been developed—Germany, some of the European countries where they have a similar mechanism.

I think in drafting legislation, no one tries to draft discriminatory legislation that doesn't allow them to do that. It was interesting, one of the individuals who came before me presented me his marks from Humber College. I said to him, "Well, do you realize your instructors are unionized at Humber?" He did make reference to that fact, that he understands that.

The point is, I think that those people need to understand that it's giving general direction, and that people do not have to belong to the association to actually receive the training, as is the case now, that they won't have to belong to a union to receive training or a business association to be eligible for that training. They're not now, and they won't be after the legislation.

Mrs Witmer: But there's no guarantee.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Witmer. Mr McGuinty.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you, Mr Chair. It gives me pleasure to speak in support of my colleague's amendment. I

think he's hit the nail on the head in terms of a recognition of the importance of the unorganized labour in the province and the representation that they legitimately should have on the board.

The absence of a provision that would allow them representation, together with the provision which clearly says there's a bias against private sector trainers—those two provisions really show up Bill 96 for what it's all about.

From a distance, you see, you look at the words, and they're wonderful words, and you can't underestimate the power of words. We've got people working around here, you get the right words, and then you put them in the right sequence, and it's remarkable what you can sell.

Let's take a look at the wonderful words that are used in here. We talk about a fair and just society. We talk about principles of access and equity. We talk about ensuring that the special needs of people with disabilities are accommodated. We talk about identifying and seeking to eliminate systemic and other discriminatory barriers. From a distance, those words, put all together, weave a wonderful garment, so that from a distance, Bill 96 looks fully clothed. But when you look at it a bit closer, you see that this emperor is naked. Naked. I hope that's not unparliamentary, Mr Chair. Bare naked.

Mr Ramsay: Not for this Chair.

The Chair: That's right. There's very little that's unparliamentary as far as this Chair's concerned. You're right.

Mr McGuinty: We've got from a distance the appearance, the illusion that we're really talking about fundamental equity; we're talking about principles of fairness. Now we have a spectacle, a spectacle of the government trying to justify the unjustifiable, trying to have us understand that which is beyond comprehension, trying to legitimize that which cannot be made legitimate. They're telling us that a group which belongs to 30% of the province's workforce will be representing the remainder.

Mr Sutherland: Every other jurisdiction does it this way.

Interjection: No, they don't.

Mr McGuinty: We simply cannot justify that. They didn't even want to allow a single representative, not one measly representative—and that's not someone who's subject to measles.

Mr Ramsay: Where's the measly association? Where are they when you need them?

Mr McGuinty: Allowing one single representative of unorganized labour to voice his concerns.

Now, of course, what we're setting up here is, I think, ultimately a source of its downfall, of the downfall of this particular bill. But also, we're setting up a potential conflict. At some point in time, you know, the goals and objectives of organized labour are going to diverge from those of unorganized labour. That's inevitable, and it'd be unrealistic not to recognize it.

Mr Paul Klopp (Huron): Give an example. I'd like an example.

Mr Offer: Why don't you, when your turn comes, take part in the debate. It's not for a whole afternoon. Why don't you ask the Chair to take part in debate, Mr Klopp?

The Chair: Mr McGuinty, don't let Mr Offer distract you.

Mr McGuinty: In short, what we're doing is we're setting ourselves up for a fall. As long as you understand and recognize that you're doing this knowingly, then that's fine; it'll lie on your heads. We've had our opportunity to speak to this. We've heard from representatives from many, many groups throughout the province who came here in all sincerity, with the hope and the expectation that the government would respect their opinions on this.

Of course we haven't had a vote on this, and the government members do in fact have time to change their minds, so I'm not prepared to give up in that regard. But presently it appears that these people who have spoken out in this matter—and I'm sure the parliamentary assistant will recognize that it's been a very controversial item, one which, if the ordinary person on the street has any understanding of the bill and any understanding of the flaw associated with this bill, surely it's the one we are trying to address through this amendment.

I remain hopeful that the government members will at this particular point reconsider and properly deal with this issue in a way which really is in keeping with those wonderful words that are set at the outset in Bill 96; those words which tell us that this is based on fundamental principles of fairness and equity.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Offer, please.

Mr Offer: Thank you. I apologize for interjecting during Mr McGuinty's very good discussion of this amendment. Mr Klopp was making a few comments, and I would have thought that he would find the time to put himself on the speakers' list and maybe say something this afternoon. Only time will tell.

However, I have a question of the parliamentary assistant, and that is, when we talk about this organization from the OFL, many times it, I think, goes down the path of being pro- or anti-union and things like this, and I don't think it should ever follow that path at all. I think the issue, to me, is that the Ontario Federation of Labour does and has and will continue to represent a certain percentage of the workers of this province. We know that is now in the area of 25% to 28% of the workers of this province and that the remainder are not within the group.

This is not meant as a criticism of the OFL at all, but I believe they would be the first to acknowledge that the membership, maybe for a number of reasons—the recession may be one—has fallen, and I think that the question is valid when one asks how assured we are of the representation of the vast majority of the province in this area.

1640

I make that comment prior to my question, which is: Recognizing that probably over 70% of the workers in this province are not within the Ontario Federation of Labour and probably may not be members within that particular organization in the future, did the government in the designing of this program look at ways in which unorganized

labour could be represented? Did you look at ways and models and means in which the workers of this province who might not fall within membership to the OFL could be possibly represented?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think the issue here, Mr Offer, is how the training needs of all workers can best be met. The fact is that there are organizations representing workers in the province right now who have a very good track record, as I pointed out earlier, on issues that go well beyond their members. One of the ones I mentioned, minimum wage, doesn't apply to many unionized workers, yet it's something that is important to all workers, especially, again, unorganized ones.

Since there are organizations called unions in the province that can well represent the interests of all workers with regard to training, then that's the group that we're consulting with and that we're expecting can work on the governing board with the other directors to meet the training needs of the province.

Mr Offer: Not surprisingly, I have a follow-up question, Mr Chair, and the follow-up question is exactly the one that I posed. The parliamentary assistant has clearly not answered my question. My question is—and if the parliamentary assistant wishes to refer it to ministry staff, I'm satisfied with that—in the designing of this legislation, did the government investigate ways and means and designs as to how unorganized labour may be represented on the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think I answered that in my first response, Mr Chair.

Mr Offer: The question is, did you or did you not look at models in which unorganized labour could be represented on the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said, Mr Offer, we are looking at meeting the training needs of all workers in the province, and in coming up with the model for OTAB, we looked at what other organizations have done in other jurisdictions. We mentioned, I think, frequently in the hearings, that the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, which is in the federal jurisdiction, has a similar model in its operation. So have other jurisdictions. All rely on organized labour to represent the interests of all workers.

Mr Offer: Let me ask you this: Did the government, in recognizing the needs for training, retraining and adjustment in this province, look at methods in which unorganized labour's needs could be represented directly on the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: I answered this question the way I want to, Mr Offer.

Mrs Cunningham: You didn't answer it.

Mr Offer: To me it would be either a yes or a no, and a "Yes, this is how we did it," or "No, we didn't."

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Offer.

Interjection: How many times do you want to hear about it?

Interjection: Until we get a straight answer.

Mr Offer: Is there an answer to that question? Did you or did you not look at the ways in which greater than

70% of the workforce could be represented on the board in any way, without having to be taken in through representation by the OFL?

Mr Gary Wilson: In considering meeting the needs of the workers of Ontario in designing OTAB, we looked at the way other jurisdictions have done it. We consulted with the labour market partners and came up with this model.

Mr Offer: When consulting with the labour market partners did you consult with people who were workers who were not organized?

Mr Gary Wilson: We consulted with the representatives of workers who are trying to meet their needs throughout the workplace, including training.

Mr Offer: It would seem that if you spoke with representatives of unorganized workers in this province, as you've just said, then surely those individuals could be the individuals that could represent those unorganized workers on the board.

Mr Gary Wilson: We decided that organized labour would represent the interests of all workers in Ontario.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Chairman, I'd like to follow this line of questioning, I think it's good, because you've made a very deliberate decision that only organized labour could represent all the workers. In order to come to that you must have eliminated other methods of doing that, other forms of representation that didn't work, because you've told me repeatedly that only organized labour could represent them. What representation can't represent other people? What associations? I'm just wondering what you eliminated. What groups out there, besides the measly association, did you find cannot represent working men and women? I mean, that's what I want to know.

We know there are different associations, there are professional groups. Basically in one way or the other all working people are organized in some way or another, some very loosely and others in unions and locals and affiliated with greater unions. They're organized in some way, but not to the extent that organized labour is. What did you reject in order to make the final decision that all the representation would then come from organized labour?

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, Mr Ramsay, the issue here is how to meet the training needs of all the workers of Ontario. In considering how to do that we've checked with other jurisdictions and saw how they did it. We consulted with the labour market partners that we've asked to share the responsibility for meeting the training needs and we've got agreement that this is the way to go ahead.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Offer had asked you if you had consulted with non-organized people and you said yes, you had. When you consulted with them did you ask them how they might be able to represent themselves on the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think what I said is that we approached the organized workers because they represent the interests of workers.

Mr Ramsay: So basically you didn't talk to any other workers than those that are organized in this province.

Mr Gary Wilson: We looked at the models that were available and that's what other jurisdictions have used

successfully. We've gone with that and seemed to have the cooperation of other labour market partners in this approach.

Mr Ramsay: So because of the example of the other models, what you decided to do then you didn't consult with workers in Ontario who don't happen to find themselves in a union.

Mr Gary Wilson: We consulted with organizations that represent the interests of workers, including training. We think that will work for the interests of all the workers of Ontario as far as training goes.

Mr Ramsay: But these organizations you talk about it, I take it, are all unions.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm sorry, would you repeat your question, Mr Ramsay?

Mr Ramsay: I take it these organizations that you speak of that you consulted with are all unions, or were there other organizations of workers that you consulted with?

Mr Gary Wilson: During the various consultations that the minister had, as well as the local board consultations, individual workers did come forward who weren't organized, but they were speaking on their own because they don't represent anything wider. We turned to organized labour because they have the structure in place and can represent the interests of all workers when it comes to training.

Mr Ramsay: And what do those individual workers who came before you say?

Mr Gary Wilson: They shared interest with other workers as far as training is concerned. They want training. They want this OTAB to get under way as soon as possible so that we can meet the training needs of Ontario's workers.

1650

Mr Ramsay: And they all said to you that unions could represent them?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think their interest is in getting the training programs that we need now.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you, Mr Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. All those in favour of—

Mrs Cunningham: No, I'd like to—

The Chair: Of course, and my apologies to you, Ms Cunningham. I didn't have my glasses on. Please go right ahead.

Mrs Cunningham: Speaking in favour of my colleague's motion, the government members will have two choices in that the essence of the Liberal motion is with regard to fair representation in the selection of directors as they represent the labour and business groups, and the other equity groups that are represented on the board, but especially, I think, the direction has been towards the fair representation of labour and business.

I think the government has clearly ignored the wishes of the public. We gave the government an opportunity, as did my colleagues, to delineate the responsibilities in representation to the three key sectors that spoke to us on many occasions, being the industrial sector, the service sector and the construction sector.

That motion was defeated earlier as we looked at subsection 9(2) of the bill. We mentioned all three sectors with

regard to business and with regard to labour. Although the debate at this point in time is around the concerns of the labour makeup, I just wanted to draw to the attention of the committee members that it was the intent, certainly of ourselves in the motion we put forward and the opportunities we gave the government, that within labour and within business we would have expected fair representation from the industrial sector, the service sector and the construction sector. That was certainly the position of many groups that came before the committee.

Within that subsection, or within that subrepresentation on behalf of those three groups, we have the other issue that seems to be taking priority in this debate for very good reasons, and that is the reflection of Ontario's workforce and the training needs of Ontario's workforce as represented specifically by the labour representatives, the majority of which will represent organized labour the way the board is constructed now.

Instead of picking a number, and the number probably could be 50%, as my colleague has stated, representing organized labour, the other 50% representing unorganized labour, I think in fairness, in the interest of getting the amendment through, both the Liberal Party and our own Conservative caucus decided to leave it fairly open-ended and just to state the importance of ensuring that the representation of business and labour reflect the diversity of the business and labour communities, especially with respect to business size and affiliation with labour organizations. I think it's both responsible and fair, and I particularly take offence at the lack of response on behalf of the government.

I think it was made particularly clear when the Ontario Federation of Labour came before this committee, especially the education sector representation, when we asked them how they felt they would represent the non-organized sector of our working community in the province of Ontario. I felt they were somewhat arrogant in their assumption that they could do just that. I don't mind putting that on record.

I think that same group has contributed significantly within their own communities by participating—I'm now talking about the education committee and the representatives of the Ontario Federation of Labour, whom I've worked with over a number of years. As individuals, they have contributed significantly when asked on local training boards, where they have chosen to participate, because they have all been asked, as was put forward to us by those local training bodies as they came before this committee and were questioned. Certainly, when we have asked, local school boards have asked, municipalities have asked, it has been that education sector that has given us very important input; there's no doubt in my mind.

At the same time, there have been many other representatives of various business groups, the industrial sector and the service sector, as well, represented in anything that I've ever had to do with training. I find it to be particularly naïve and reflecting the inexperience, I think, of the members of the government in community work, that they should be sitting here and saying very naïvely—if they had any experience at all, they would know that the Ontario Federation of Labour speaks for the Ontario Federation of Labour and speaks for organized workers.

Mr Sutherland: Lecturing.

Mrs Cunningham: I don't really feel that I'm lecturing anybody, Mr Chairman; I just feel I'm stating the facts as they've been presented to us by numbers of people before this committee.

I think all of us know that for most of the history in Canada, Canadians have prospered by relying—I've said this before and I'll say it lots—on the resources beneath our feet. So much of our industry, our success, our commerce, our economy has been driven by those resources and the jobs related to them, beneath our feet. That has to do, of course, with the pulp and paper industry, mining, agriculture; we all know what we mean by that. Certainly, in the information age we're entering, the training will be very different and we will be relying on the resources between our ears.

In that respect, I think this government is sorely amiss and has not grasped the importance of reflecting the working community. They have not in fact grasped the importance of the labour partners working together. Because of the deal that was struck with the Ontario Federation of Labour on the makeup of these boards, they have literally ignored since a year ago last summer any representation, as has the Ontario Federation of Labour.

With due respect, they've actually encouraged their members, or at least drawn to the attention of their members, that any consultations, whether they be struck by the existing local training boards—they themselves did, of course, have hearings in the different communities because they were looking at what kind of input they would have, given their expertise, given the partnerships that have been developed across Ontario—the Ontario Federation of Labour found it necessary to write a letter of course to its unionized membership advising them that these boards had no official status, that these meetings had no official status.

I'm not sure what "official" meant. It probably meant that they themselves and the government had not agreed that they had any official status, because that's what "official status" means now: government and labour giving some direction to meetings held within our communities as being "official," whatever that means.

In my view, I just think this whole thing has been a farce from the beginning, but I still held hope; obviously, these hearings are just a joke, and I can tell you that I will not forget it.

This particular motion right now, with the opportunities this government had earlier today to take a look at the makeup of the board representing the different sectors, now to take a look at the makeup of the board with a particular emphasis on business, small and large business—that's the intent—on the particular representation of organized and unorganized labour—for the government to just sit back and say it thinks it's going to work the way it is, all I can say is good luck to them, and I do wish it.

I think that the parliamentary assistant has been particularly inarticulate in his responses to the questions by my colleague, and in fact I would go so far as to say that it would have been better if he had said, "No comment," than to try to answer them, because we have not had the

most simple questions answered. We have not had them answered. In fact, I think you probably are starring different sections of the legislation and just throwing it in as responses, because most of the responses to the questions have not related in any way to the questions.

I'm going to ask you now: Did you in fact make a deal with the Ontario Federation of Labour that ended up in an agreement, telling this group of parliamentarians and the public of Ontario that the deal was seven organized and one representing the construction trades? Is that a deal you made with the Ontario Federation of Labour or not?

1700

Mr Gary Wilson: Mrs Cunningham, there are no deals like that. What we did was we consulted widely with the labour market partners, whom we identified, based on our understanding of what the other jurisdictions have done. We saw, and you'll remember from the hearings, that while people did come forward mentioning that it would be nice, in effect, if some mechanism existed to have unorganized workers represented, in fact nobody came forward with anything that was accountable and responsible as far as providing that representation is concerned, whereas, as I said, other jurisdictions, including the federal board that has been set up, relies on the accountable, responsible system that organized labour has evolved to represent the interests of workers. So that is how we're doing it.

You've said that we risk ignoring the public. I think we all agree that we ignore the public at our peril. We're setting up a system that will meet the training needs of Ontario's workers, and if we fail in doing that, then we're accountable for it.

Mrs Cunningham: I think you suggested that nobody came up with a recommendation with regard to alternatives within the labour board. I'm wondering if you consider "nobody" to be the chambers of commerce across the province of Ontario, which suggested that organized and unorganized labour be considered, and that the 60%-40% formula be considered. Are you considering that not a good example?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think I qualified that by saying an accountable and responsible way of—

Mrs Cunningham: Of choosing?

Mr Gary Wilson: —choosing a representative.

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, okay. Mr Chairman, I have a number of letters. I won't read them all, but I'll start reading them.

This one is from the Hamilton District Autobody Repair Association, from Hamilton. I think Hamilton has one or two New Democratic Party representatives—I'm not sure—but whoever they are, they're not very vocal on behalf of this group. In fact, I've never heard them say anything.

Mr Huget: Is that the regional association?

Mrs Cunningham: Hamilton District Autobody Repair Association.

The Chair: Go ahead, Mrs Cunningham. Don't let—

Mrs Cunningham: "Many auto repair businesses and their trade associations have made great strides in training and skills enhancement. After the construction trades, the

auto repair trades have the highest number of registered apprentices in the province of Ontario. Many skills training initiatives have been developed in the auto repair trade and we worry that the continuation of the enthusiasm that the trade has developed for skills training will evaporate or be displaced when the emphasis of the OTAB board seems destined for skills training of the unionized sector.

"The clear reality is that the vast majority of our member shops are non-organized, and fear that the Ontario Federation of Labour's rumoured desire to 'represent' our industry on the OTAB board will lead to conflicts and dissension in the industry."

This is a very large industry with regard to apprenticeship training. It's second only to the construction trades, which we know represent one half of the apprenticeship training in Ontario. This is the second. We've already heard from the construction trades industry. Now we're hearing from the second, the autobody repair association.

"We have asked the minister for a clear statement of intent from the OTAB board that non-organized business training needs will not be supplanted by trade union needs.

"To date, no answer has been forthcoming."

I wonder if the parliamentary assistant—the minister has had over a year to respond to this letter—could answer the second-largest group, the autobody repair association, in this regard. "We have asked the minister for a clear statement of intent from the OTAB board that non-organized business training needs will not be supplanted by trade union needs."

Mr Gary Wilson: Mrs Cunningham, I think the response is in the structure of OTAB, where the directors have to represent the interests of all Ontario workplaces and not the particular sectors they're from. Remember, there are business directors here as well who can take that into account. But the other thing is, I thought you were going to come up with something that suggested how the representatives could be chosen in an accountable, responsible way.

Mrs Cunningham: In direct response to that—

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, can I have some time?

The Chair: Yes, when it's your turn you'll get your turn. We've got all evening to be here, Mr Sutherland.

Mrs Cunningham: I think that the government of the day has left it up to the groups in fact to look for the representation within the groups. I'm now specifically saying that the two education groups came up with a representative group. They made certain that they got what they wanted, meaning that the colleges are representing their sector, the community trainers are representing their sector, and the other three sectors certainly had input. I'm now talking about education, the universities and the private trainers. They're very disappointed that they weren't represented. We had five clearly defined sectors that came forward. They wanted five seats. They would have been satisfied with three because they did feel the school systems ought to be the third seat.

Within the Ontario Federation of Labour I should say that there are the unionized workers, and within the labour workforce there's a very large percentage of people who

don't belong to unions. My suggestion would be that the Ontario Federation of Labour could pick who it likes if in fact it had four seats, and if the other seats were left to the non-organized workers, I can assure you that the Hamilton District Autobody Repair Association and its parent group and the construction trades could easily have got together, invited all of the other trades to meet with them. The non-unionized sector of those trades could have sent representatives. I really think that the Ontario Federation of Labour would have worked very well with those representatives in order to make certain that as many trades as possible could have been represented.

I'm not assured right now that just because unionized workers are represented, the different trades will be represented. There's no responsible answer to this, and I have to tell you that you've heard it so often, right from the very beginning, and it's not the job of the government to tell the organized workers and the non-organized workers how to pick. You didn't tell the Ontario Federation of Labour how to pick. They'll pick. If you were to tell the non-organized workers, "Here's a group that sent forward a letter"—and I have lots of others, if you want them. I don't really think it's fair.

Mr Gary Wilson: Is that group representing workers, though?

Mrs Cunningham: This group is representing workers and management, okay?

Interjections.

Mrs Cunningham: Is there something wrong with managers in this whole thing?

Mr Gary Wilson: No, but they have their directors already, Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, so that means within any trade organization, if workers and managers work together in a unionized workplace or in a non-unionized workplace, if in fact the workers are represented somewhere, the management cannot be represented somewhere else. Is that what you're saying?

Mr Gary Wilson: We're just looking for an accountable response.

Mrs Cunningham: You're saying that if the managers are represented somewhere through the business group, the workers can't be represented somewhere else through the labour group? Is that what this whole outburst is about? The minute I say "managers," we have this sort of image.

Mr Gary Wilson: No, all I'm saying is that the board is set up to recognize the interests of both business and labour. What you've done here is combine them. What we've done is separate them and say that there are interests that workers share as workers. We've looked to the organized labour to choose representatives partly because there is no system accountable and responsible that could mean unorganized workers.

Mrs Cunningham: All I can say is this is from the Hamilton District Autobody Repair Association. I would have guessed that within that association everybody would be there. It doesn't say whether it's workers or managers here. If there's a problem with that, I certainly will ask

them and clarify tomorrow. But they do go on to say that, "The clear reality is that the vast majority of our member shops," and I don't know whether "member shops" means no managers can be there. Do you know that? If you say "member shops," does that mean you can have managers or does it mean you can't have managers?

1710

Mr Gary Wilson: To me that implies that it's only managers.

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, I see, well I'll look into that then.

"The vast majority of our member shops," and you think that means managers? That would be very—

Mr Gary Wilson: Or owners or managers.

Mrs Cunningham: Or owners, oh my God, owners and managers. That might mean job creation and wealth creation, that would be a problem.

Mr Gary Wilson: What it raises in my mind is whether they could represent the workers.

Mrs Cunningham: I see. You're right. Managers couldn't represent workers, not if we've got an OTAB board where business and labour are working together.

Interjection.

Mrs Cunningham: Would you like to continue on?

Mr Sutherland: I sure as heck—

Mrs Cunningham: "The majority of our member shops are not organized in fear that the Ontario Federation of Labour's rumoured desire to represent our industry on the OTAB board." "Desire." It says, "Labour's rumoured desire." At this point it was rumoured, but they've made it very clear their "desire to represent our industry on the OTAB board will lead to conflicts and dissension in the industry."

I will phone the Hamilton District Autobody Repair Association and ask if workers in fact did have anything to do with this, because if they're not workers and they're managers, I'm sure we wouldn't have any impact on this particular clause.

Mr Chairman, I have for the moment said enough with regard to the selection of directors and the importance of ensuring that the representation of business and labour reflects the diversity of the business and labour communities, especially with respect to business size and affiliation with labour organization. I think I've made myself very, very clear on behalf of the representatives who came before our committee and I think the government has made itself very clear in its closed-mindedness.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. Mr Sutherland, please?

Mr Sutherland: Thank you, Mr Chair. I must say I have tried to be patient and listened to Ms Cunningham from London North go on and on and on. She has said that the parliamentary assistant hasn't provided her with the answers. The real problem is she doesn't want to accept the answers; that is what the real problem is.

Mr Wilson has said that all the other jurisdictions—the federal government, Germany, whatever—do this type of

business-labour composition. She's been told time and time again through the hearing. Now in response to repeated questioning—and I thought we were supposed to be having a debate, not Senate-like hearings here where you keep questioning the witness and try to come after him 16 different times with a different nuance—they have been told that that's how it's done in the other jurisdictions, yet they don't want to seem to accept that as a legitimate answer. It is a very legitimate answer.

This whole process started with the Liberal government's Premier's council on skills development. They were to look at other models. They looked at other models. This is the type of setup that's used in those other models. I don't see the issue of unorganized workers in the Premier's council report. I didn't see that as the central issue. Setting up an effective training system was the effective issue; that's what this piece of legislation is doing.

Ms Cunningham puts forward a proposal that she wants to see different areas of the business community reflected in terms of representation. I think the minister has said that he wants diverse representation from both business and labour. The government still has the ability there, even under the current setup, to ensure that not all one business sector is represented or not all one labour sector is represented, whether that be auto, steel, whatever.

There's plenty of opportunity for different views to be put forward, and I think the opposition at times have said, "Sure." What is their point? They disagree with this composition. If they want to ignore the fact that this has worked in other jurisdictions, these types of composition where organized labour represents all labour, that's fine if they don't want to agree with that, but that is the legitimate answer. That is clearly a legitimate answer. It has worked in other jurisdiction.

The real question here is not the narrow-mindedness of this government; it's the question that the opposition has to maybe not like the answer, maybe disagree with that format. Fair enough, but they have to accept that as a legitimate answer, and I haven't heard the opposition say today that they're willing to accept that, even though the Liberal government's report said this is the type of thing to do, follow these other successful models.

That's really where this whole debate about composition boils down to, okay? These are what have gone on in the other jurisdictions. It was the basis of a report, I think it was a very good report, and so we come to that and the question is not this government conspiring with secret deals behind the scenes, it's a question of whether the opposition wants to accept legitimate answers and success stories that have worked in other jurisdictions.

Mr Wilson asked Ms Cunningham to see where the presenters had said what type of system would come forward with unorganized workers. What type of system? I've looked through the recommendations, and many of them said unorganized representatives should be on there. None of them came up with a representative and accountable system as Mr Wilson was asking for.

Your letter from the Hamilton group doesn't talk about an accountable representative system. It talks about

unorganized representatives should be on there, but there's no idea of how to get a representative accountable system.

Mr Chair: I would hope that the opposition has the right to disagree. They have a very good right to not necessarily like the decision there, but to not accept the fact that the parliamentary assistant has consistently—and I want to say consistently—provided legitimate answers to their questioning—again I come back to the point that I thought we were to debate the merits of the legislation, not get into Senate-like hearings where we question the parliamentary assistant as if he's up for confirmation for a position.

The Chair: I must point out, Mr Sutherland, that was certainly the practice when the New Democrats were in opposition.

Mr Sutherland: Okay, fair enough. I thought we were here to debate merits of legislation, and I don't mind—

Interjection.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, I don't mind them asking points of clarification, I think that's valid of staff and of the PA, but I do think it's gone a little beyond asking points of clarification. I think it's gone beyond more questioning in trying to find backroom deals. I would hope they continue to bring up their points that they disagree with, make them in an effective, articulate way, and Mr Wilson, who has responded in an articulate way with legitimate answers, will continue to do so. But I hope we can go beyond the rhetoric. I must say I'm disappointed in Ms Cunningham, because I know she's normally beyond the rhetoric—

Mrs Cunningham: I consider where the criticism is coming from.

Mr Sutherland: —but during this week of hearings we've been lectured: accusing other groups of being arrogant, accusing us of being narrow-minded.

Ms Cunningham, I wouldn't attribute those qualities to you, I would expect that you would not attribute those qualities to this government, which worked very hard on a very lengthy process to try to develop a good training system, and that is the ultimate key, not the type of little political nuances that you want to keep bringing up here.

The key is to get this thing going, get it represented, get the labour market partners there and get on with it so that people who need the training will get that, and that's what this piece of legislation has been doing. Mr Wilson has been answering and responding in an effective way and has been very accountable in responding to the legitimate questions that have been asked. If you don't want to accept the answers, that's fine, you don't have to do that, but he has given the legitimate answers. Thank you.

The Chair: Perhaps because for the first time today I'm actually enjoying myself as Chair, and knowing that Mr McGuinty and Mr Offer want to go on the speakers' list but that Ms Cunningham would very much want to specifically and briefly respond to Mr Sutherland—Ms Cunningham?

Mrs Cunningham: Well, it's a point of personal privilege, because I think I've been slurred, Mr Chairman. However, I think it's in the good political spirit that the member for Oxford usually displays, and actually I haven't seen him this excited about anything for a long time.

I would like to say to the member for Oxford that I think I was extremely responsible in bringing forth my criticisms, that my challenge to him would be this. Yes, this is a challenge. If in fact the government of the day has decided that racial minorities, as diverse as they are, can choose one representative; that persons with disabilities—and I personally understand the diverse nature of persons with disabilities—can get themselves together and choose one representative; that francophones, who have told us that they want to be represented in a geographical way and other ways, can get themselves together and choose one representative; that representers of educators and trainers, in spite of the fact that they were not allowed to have five specific groups have a seat, they themselves got together and chose two representatives, my suggestion would be, in fact, that the seven directors representing labour, if they had direction from the government to represent, truly, the labour force, I think that they could get together among themselves and choose representatives from both the non-organized workers and the organized workers, and I believe it's insulting to single that group out as having to have organized workers only.

1720

I also would throw out to Mr Sutherland how he will explain to the public of Ontario how the business community, which has very diverse interests with regard to small business, large business, geographical, different kinds of business—we've already explained it—has been asked within its group to set forward representation.

There is only one group that has specific direction, with regard to representing either its workforce, business or labour, or its groups, educators and trainers, francophones, persons with disabilities, racial minorities and women, as to whether it works within an organized workforce or unorganized—all of these others can come from either—and that's labour. You explain that to the public, because I can't, nor do I intend to, because it is profoundly unfair.

Mr McGuinty: I have a question for Mr Wilson. I am sure you would agree that the government has deliberately chosen to exclude unorganized labour from having its own chosen representation on the board. This is not accidental. It was a deliberate choice made by the government.

Mr Gary Wilson: No. The choice was to find someone who could represent the interests of working people in Ontario.

Mr McGuinty: Will there be persons chosen by unorganized labour sitting on the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: How would you propose that would happen?

Mr McGuinty: I don't know—I'm just asking you. Will there be persons sitting on the board, as created under Bill 96, chosen by unorganized labour? Do you anticipate seeing that happen?

Mr Gary Wilson: As you know from the legislation, the directors are chosen by the labour market partners and appointed by the government in consultation with the labour market partners.

Mr McGuinty: Do you anticipate that there will be some kind of process, once Bill 96 becomes law, that will evolve whereby unorganized labour, on its own, will select a representative to sit on OTAB?

Mr Gary Wilson: I don't see that happening.

Mr McGuinty: Okay, thank you. This is the result of a deliberate choice on the part of the government. The government has decided, in its own wisdom, as it's fully entitled to do, to ensure that unorganized labour will not have a chosen representative on the board. That came about, as I say, as a result of a deliberate decision on the part of the government. When you made that decision, was that made at the outset or after a process of elimination, looking at other models?

Mr Gary Wilson: Actually, I have to reconsider my answer to your earlier question when you said "if unorganized labour comes together," and I just thought about it. That would make them organized if they came together, so in that sense, I guess it could happen.

Mr McGuinty: Tell me about the models you looked at. Did any of those models include a system whereby unorganized labour had its own representatives?

Mr Gary Wilson: No. We're not aware of any models where that was in place.

Mr McGuinty: Did you, through all the creative means at your disposal, accessing all of the bureaucratic expertise—and I mean that in a positive sense—and all the creativity there, attempt to come up with your own model?

Mr Gary Wilson: We looked to see what worked in other jurisdictions. We looked to see the work that had been done already in this area, and in fact we have come up with some modifications to make it work in Ontario, to reflect Ontario's diverse population, for instance, so the directors will do that.

Mr McGuinty: But the government did not, in and of its own self, devise any system for that direct representation?

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm sorry, it's right here in the legislation, the model that we've come up with to represent the interests of workers across Ontario.

Mr McGuinty: None of the models that you looked at contained that system whereby there would be representation direct, as opposed to indirect, through organized labour representatives, of unorganized labour. Is that correct?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes.

Mr McGuinty: The government was unable to devise a system—for whatever reason; maybe it felt it wouldn't work—that it felt was workable which would see unorganized labour have its own representation on the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: We've come up with a system that we think will represent the training interests of all workers.

Mr McGuinty: This system, you feel, is better than any alternative.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

Mr McGuinty: Thank you. My colleague has questions about some of the other jurisdictions.

Mr Offer: I'm glad Mr Sutherland is here. I wasn't going to participate any longer in this debate, but after

listening to the comments by Mr Sutherland, I could not help but do so. Mr Wilson, I asked you, as Mr McGuinty has asked you, whether there are any other models that take into account the possibility of the representation of unorganized labour. Even Mr Sutherland had indicated, "Take a look at Germany, take a look at the Netherlands, take a look at the UK." I'll tell you something: I'm looking at them.

It's interesting that in fact the models that have been employed by those countries, which you use as a model, are significantly different. Where are they significantly different? They are significantly different in that those models which Mr Sutherland, which you and every one else on the government side prop up as the example to follow, all have and retain the existence of government on the boards, such as a tripartite committee.

Germany has 51 members: 17 business, 17 labour, 17 government, and the executive board, nine members, three business, three labour, three government. The Netherlands has nine members, three business, three labour, three government. The argument is that this is—

Mr Sutherland: Tell the people of Ontario to put more government on it.

Mr Offer: Mr Sutherland, I hope you're listening to the summary of those training boards which you, less than 20 minutes ago, were putting on a pedestal as those that should be followed. The document which I am reading is provided by the ministry.

The question and the point that has to be made is that those models have employed a representation of unorganized workers, and they've done so by making certain that government still retains a seat on those boards because it has an overarching responsibility to all people of its jurisdiction, as does this province, but in this model which you have chosen you have not followed those models. You have cut yourself off from representation on the board. The question that we have to ask is, because on one hand you use the models as an example to follow but in reality you have not, because you have not put members of the government on the board and those members of the government would in fact have a responsibility to all people of this province—organized labour, unorganized labour, the vast majority of people who don't see themselves as members of this board, who do not see themselves as having a representative on the board. You have, by this legislation, cut that cord.

I asked you time and again whether there was a model. Well, there is a model. Other jurisdictions, the ones that you say you have followed, are indeed those models. Why can there not be the existence of a member from the government on those boards so that the concerns that have been raised today could be addressed, so that people who don't see them having a representative on the board would always have a person from government who would have an overarching responsibility to all people—labour, whether organized or not, educators, trainers, with disabilities, without, women—all could use and should have that right.

You cannot say there is not a model, because there is. There are many and it's the model that embraces the term

"responsibility." The model in Bill 96 does not. Other models have. Especially to Mr Sutherland, who treads on thin ice and then walks closer to the centre of the lake as he speaks, we should be looking at those models as an example as to how all persons can be represented, and they can be represented if you embrace the principle of responsibility.

My question is, why does the government, in looking at the different models, not embrace that principle and put itself as representation on the board so that the issues that have been brought forward by this amendment, such as representation of unorganized workers, could be met?

Mr Gary Wilson: The difficulty is that there are, as you pointed out, many different models. You just can't choose one off the shelf, as it were, and expect it to work in Ontario. What we're doing is sharing the responsibility

with the labour market partners to come up with the training that Ontario workers need. To do that in an effective manner, if you're going to get any cooperation out of them, then they're going to be expected to come up with the decisions on their own in an overall accountable structure with the government of Ontario. I think we've done that with the model that we've adopted here.

The Chair: There being no further debate, all those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion please indicate. Those opposed? Mr Ramsay's motion is defeated.

Ms Cunningham, you have a motion which is the next motion in terms of the ordering of motions. We are adjourned until 10 am tomorrow morning. Thank you kindly.

The committee adjourned at 1733.

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STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

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Vice-Chair / Vice-Président: Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

Conway, Sean G. (Renfrew North/-Nord L)

*Dadamo, George (Windsor-Sandwich ND)

Jordan, Leo (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

*Klopp, Paul (Huron ND)

McGuinty, Dalton (Ottawa South/-Sud L)

Murdock, Sharon (Sudbury ND)

*Offer, Steven (Mississauga North/-Nord L)

Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)

*In attendance / présents

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Cunningham, Dianne (London North/-Nord PC) for Mr Turnbull

Frankford, Robert (Scarborough East/-Est ND) for Ms Murdock and Mr Wood

Harrington, Margaret H. (Niagara Falls ND) for Ms Murdock

Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway

Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Wood

Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Iles ND) for Mr Waters

Witmer, Elizabeth (Waterloo North/-Nord PC) for Mr Jordan

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:

Beall, Kathleen, legal counsel, OTAB project, Ministry of Education and Training

Hansen, Ron (Lincoln ND)

Wilson, Gary, parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education and Training

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Schuh, Cornelia, deputy chief legislative counsel



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Official Report of Debates (Hansard)

Thursday 25 February 1993

Journal des débats (Hansard)

Jeudi 25 février 1993

Standing committee on resources development

Ontario Training and
Adjustment Board Act, 1993

Comité permanent du développement des ressources

Loi de 1993 sur le Conseil
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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

Thursday 25 February 1993

The committee met at 1003 in committee room 1.

ONTARIO TRAINING AND ADJUSTMENT BOARD ACT, 1993

LOI DE 1993 SUR LE CONSEIL ONTARIEN DE FORMATION ET D'ADAPTATION DE LA MAIN-D'OEUVRE

Consideration of Bill 96, An Act to establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board / Loi créant le Conseil ontarien de formation et d'adaptation de la main-d'oeuvre.

The Chair (Mr Peter Kormos): It's 10:03. We shall continue to wait for a quorum.

The committee recessed at 1003 and resumed at 1012.

The Chair: We can now begin. Go ahead, Mrs Cunningham. You have a motion.

Mrs Dianne Cunningham (London North): I move that section 9 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Same

"(4.1) In the selection of directors representing labour, the importance of reflecting the proportions of Ontario's labour force that work in organized and unorganized workplaces shall be recognized."

The intent of this amendment is to ensure that organized labour does not dominate the labour representation on the board. We do know that organized labour will have a major role in shaping the province's future training programs, as it has been allocated eight seats on the board: The Ontario Federation of Labour has been allocated seven seats, while the Ontario Building and Construction Trades Council has one seat. I'd like some clarification from the parliamentary assistant, even about the statement I made, as to where we see that in writing in the legislation. Although the statement has been made, it is our understanding, I'd like that clarified.

Organized labour represents only one third of the province's workforce, and the Ontario Federation of Labour, only a portion of that. The question to the parliamentary assistant is, who will represent the views of the majority of the province's workers? So at this point, I have two questions on the agenda for this morning.

Our observation is that to allow unions, which account for approximately 35% of the workforce, to hold all of the labour seats on the board is unrealistic and unfair. I underline those two words: unrealistic and unfair. It's as simple as that. The non-unionized majority must be represented. As the Christian Labour Association of Canada stated—and my colleague yesterday mentioned this association because it has made a concern very clear to all of us—the real concern for all of us should be, can the Ontario Federation of Labour and the building trades council, in view of their philosophy and track record, be expected to act even-

handedly and in the best interests of approximately 65% of Ontario workers who do not want to belong to these organizations affiliated with unions? There were numbers of associations that asked that same question.

As we take a look at the research that was done by our research counsel, we know that this would be the single largest complaint on the part of the public with regard to the makeup of the OTAB board, not just the numbers and the underrepresentation of education, with just two seats, but within the groups themselves. We've offered a number of amendments which haven't been accepted by the government. This would be the last amendment. My colleagues from the Liberal Party made the same effort yesterday. Theirs was in three parts. This one is in just the one part: There would be less reason for the government not to support this one.

If you take away all of the rhetoric about a new era in labour relations, broad consultation, public involvement, cooperation and partnership, what is there on the public record that reassures us that these labour representatives indeed can put self-interest aside and have progressive ideas about what it might take for this province to remain as efficient, productive and competitive as it can be in a global economic economy?

In my view, the rhetoric of the government around its own intent to consult with the public and to listen, which was probably one of the main themes of its campaign before the last provincial election, is being mirrored here in these consultations. I should tell you that last evening I was out speaking on the subject of education and OTAB in Scarborough in a school, and as I reminded the public that they have now spent \$53,000 just for the consultations here in this committee—

Mr Kimble Sutherland (Oxford): How much did it cost to read the names of lakes and rivers into the record?

The Chair: Don't let yourself be distracted by other members of the committee, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: To talk about somebody reading lakes and rivers into the record during question period in the House has very little to do with the fact that hundreds of people made presentations before this committee, either in person or written briefs. To compare that with some of the tactics that all of us use from time to time—the member for Oxford should have been here when the Chairman of this committee spent, how many hours was it, on the subject of auto insurance?

The Chair: If the truth be known, it was a whole month, as you recall, at 3 every afternoon, culminating in the now famous and historic record-setting 17-and-a-half-hour debate.

Mrs Cunningham: The member for Oxford is complaining about the member for Nipissing taking part of an

afternoon, and this was his party? If you're going to complain, make sure you know your facts and make absolutely certain you understand in what context it is presented. We don't compare the behaviour of elected representatives—who from time to time lose their cool, including myself—to the public, who have been asked to come before this committee. Ads were put in the newspaper that cost us over \$25,000.

I'm just going to say one more thing on this, because of course I don't have a lot of hope, but I did put some questions on the record that I noticed the parliamentary assistant wrote down, and I will repeat them again one by one.

But do you know what the principal in this school said last night? I think all of us should think about this. It's our responsibility to represent the public. Certainly fiscally it's important, but to listen to them is just as important. The budget for his school for supplies and services, for that whole school for the year, was \$53,000. So we have now spent in this committee the budget for Knob Hill Jr School. What it would spend for all of those students and teachers on supplies, books, paper, pencils and services, we have spent in three weeks on this committee; and the government got out of that one amendment it could put forward, and to this date hasn't accepted any amendments we have put forward on behalf of the public we serve. I think that is the downfall of a democratic system, but especially this government, that said that it would do business in a different way and that it would listen to the public.

I'll repeat my two questions one by one, because they are placed a number of times in the presentations we heard. Whatever the answer is, I will be quoting the parliamentary assistant across this province in the next few months, so please be careful how you present it. I'd like it to be something you would be proud to be stating on behalf of the government of the province of Ontario. Who will represent the views of the majority of the province's workers—that would be the unorganized workers—in workplaces in the province of Ontario?

1020

Mr Gary Wilson (Kingston and The Islands): Mrs Cunningham, as we've tried to make clear over the course of both the public hearings and this clause-by-clause, we see the governing board as a whole as being responsible for the interests of all workers in the workplaces of Ontario. As you've said, you think people in public positions—I'm paraphrasing a bit here—should have the larger public interest at heart, and that's what we've written into this legislation through the order-in-council appointment of the directors.

But we're also looking at sharing the responsibility for providing training with the labour market partners. We've identified several groups there, and they'll be led by business and labour. In our consultations with those two groups, we found—using models we talked about yesterday—that the only group that can represent the interest of workers in an organized fashion is organized labour. By definition, they are organized, and organized means they are accountable and responsible to the membership in a

way that unorganized workers can't be. There is no system of identifying any unorganized worker—again, by definition—who can speak for unorganized workers.

But second, there is this larger accountability that not only the directors would feel, regardless of which sector they come from, but the individual sectors, in that the credibility they will enjoy in the community will depend on the success of OTAB.

You also referred to the democratic system that is responsible for the public institutions we have now, but part of the problem, as we've heard over the course of these hearings, is that there's a lot of dissatisfaction with the training systems we've developed, that our democratic system has developed. The democratic system is flexible enough to look at that system and propose alternatives, and that's what we're doing here by sharing the responsibility for the training system with the labour market partners. Through consultation with the partners, we've come up with this model that we're proposing in OTAB.

Mrs Cunningham: My second question: Given the philosophy and the track record of the Ontario Federation of Labour and the building trades council, can they be expected to act evenhandedly and in the best interests of the approximately 65% of Ontario's workers who do not want to belong to these organized, affiliated unions?

Mr Gary Wilson: We think, and I think this view is shared by many unorganized workers—those who depend on minimum wage, for instance, and know the record of organizations like the Ontario Federation of Labour in placing that floor for minimum wage or fighting for medicare, unemployment insurance. Those are kinds of issues that affect all workers, whether they're unorganized or not, and as has been pointed out, when it comes to minimum wage, very few of the members of the Ontario Federation of Labour, for example, require that kind of protection; they have contracts that address the issue of wages, and not laws like those dealing with minimum wage. So certainly there is in that record you mention a vast body of evidence that suggests they can represent the interests of all workers.

Mrs Cunningham: My third one: As we were not successful in increasing the number of education seats to five, or even three, and since the Ontario Federation of Labour education committee chairperson, Mr Turk, made the presentation before this committee, can we expect that within the labour representatives, the Ontario Federation of Labour will be asking those who do represent education interests specifically to be one or more of the labour reps?

Mr Gary Wilson: We've asked the labour partners to consider in their nominations the diversity of Ontario's population and the geographic nature of it as well, just to make sure we do get that cross-section. It has also been pointed out that labour is involved in training, so we can expect that some of its nominees might have training and education experience in their background. However, it's our responsibility to make sure that the directors who are appointed do reflect the diversity of Ontario, but as to that being a specific request, that's not there.

Mrs Cunningham: My last question would be this: The parliamentary assistant said yesterday in response to my Liberal colleague and again in response to my first question that, indeed, how could government expect the unorganized workers to choose their representatives? As you know, we would ask that half the labour seats, for instance—we didn't even give a number, but we did say in this motion that the labour seats be representative, as you've said, of the organized as well as the unorganized workers, in some proportion. We didn't put a number in because we wanted to be flexible. But the response you made is a most disturbing response to the workers of Ontario: that the unorganized workers would not be able to get together and put forward their representatives. I think I'm correct in you making that statement.

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, I'm not quite sure how that would work. That's the truth.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm not sure how it would work either, but I will remind the government that I'm not sure how it worked when we ask that one director representing racial minorities be chosen. I'm not sure how that will work, but at least racial minorities in this province were given the opportunity to get together and make their selection. One director representing women: I'm not sure how that's going to work, but the government did leave it to them to make their selection, they allowed them to get together and do that. One director representing francophones; one director representing persons with disabilities. Two directors representing educators and trainers: Where we clearly understand where the five sectors are, we just gave them two directors.

Seven directors representing labour, where we really understand that 60% or 70% of the workforce is unorganized and 40% or 30% of the workforce is organized. We haven't split that out at all. We haven't given specific direction where we knew there were very clear divisions. I would make the same argument with regard to business. We know there will be seven directors representing business. The next amendment will clearly say that small and large business ought to be represented. Where we do know the specific divisions in our workforce, we should be giving clear direction, especially given the track record of the government and the strong view of the public that organized labour is running this government.

I would think this would be an opportunity for you to put forward some specific direction to labour and to business, because if we were the government, you would be contesting that big business was running the government. I can tell you right now that we would give direction to the makeup of the business group; we're not afraid to do that, because if you're the government, that's your responsibility. So once again I ask you, how can I succinctly describe to the public your reticence to direct the labour unions and the organized workers and give them the confidence to say that within this group there will be a representative of both organized and unorganized labour?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think our responsibility is to come up with a training system that works for Ontario in a way it's not working now. There is that wide agreement that the

training can be improved. Our model depends on sharing the responsibility with the labour market partners, and a true responsibility is to let them make decisions that reflect the interests of their part of the labour force, or the training component. You seem to be suggesting—I think you said that if you were the government, you'd go in and name the business.

Mrs Cunningham: No, I did not say that. Let's be very clear. I would give direction in legislation that both small and large business be represented as part of the directors, within the group of directors, just like I would give very specific direction that both organized and unorganized workers be represented as a group among the seven directors representing labour. That's all we're trying to do.

Mr Gary Wilson: We're sharing the responsibility with the labour market partners in that we expect they will want to see the system work. That will be the true evaluation of how well this model works: the kind of training that is provided in Ontario. For them to work in a responsible way means they've got to make these decisions on their own and are accountable to us through the appointment process as well as the other accountability systems that are in here. We think that is the main criterion: the responsibility that each of the partners brings to the table. The accountability structure of organized labour is there, whereas it isn't in place for unorganized workers, again by definition.

1030

Mrs Elizabeth Witmer (Waterloo North): I'd like to deal with this issue. First of all, I'd like to respond to something Mr Wilson said. He said the only group capable of representing working people is organized labour, because they are organized. I would suggest that is just an excuse the government is making. I think it's being quite lazy in making that particular statement, because if you're looking to ensure that all the voices in Ontario are heard, certainly this government has been creative before, and it could be looking at a different mechanism to ensure that the unorganized workers are represented as well.

Unless there's a change in that structure as far as the labour partners are concerned, I think the OTAB structure is going to be doomed. I think it is very unrepresentative. As my colleague has indicated, approximately two thirds of the workers in this province who are not unionized. In fact, the OFL doesn't even represent all of those people to begin with. I think we're looking at a structure that really is a complete sham, because I don't think you can expect all workers in this province to be represented by unionized representatives.

I would suggest that this government continue to look for a mechanism, if it's not happy with what we're suggesting here, that would attract to OTAB those individuals or those companies that do not belong to an association or a special interest group. If you take a look at the OFL and the perspective it's going to be bringing to this board, I don't believe that perspective is shared by all employees in this province. They've indicated that they believe a payroll training tax is essential and that this should be paid for by the employers and then administered by a bipartite Ontario training commission. The OFL has also indicated, so we

know that's the position it's going to be bringing forward, that it supports only the public sector in providing the training; again, there's no room there, it appears, for the private trainers at all.

So we know immediately that seven of the people around that table of 22 are going to be promoting a payroll training tax paid for by employers, are going to try to eliminate any work whatsoever for the private trainers, try to make sure they drive those people out of business, just like this government's trying to drive the private child care sector out of business, because it really doesn't want anybody in the private sector to be creating new jobs for people. I can tell you that those views the OFL hold are not shared by employees in this province. People have consciously made a choice not to join a union. They do not want the OFL representing them.

I think this government is being very lazy—I'll stress it again, very lazy—to keep saying, "These are the only organized people around." I'll tell you, you've been creative before. When you want to find a representative, you find a representative from the disabled, from the francophones, from women, from visible minorities. There is absolutely no reason why you can't take a look at non-union firms, because non-union firms have established their own communication systems for gathering the views of their employees, and you can use those systems to identify representatives of non-union employees with interests in training who are willing to serve on an OTAB board.

The very least you could have done was to place newspaper advertisements requesting individuals to apply. You've done that for other positions. However, you haven't for these. You haven't been creative. You haven't looked at alternative representation methods. I can tell you that because you haven't done that, this OTAB structure that you've got before you is doomed. It's non-representative and it's a complete sham. It does not represent workers in this province.

Mr Bob Huget (Sarnia): How do you really feel?

Mr Sutherland: Yes, how do you really feel?

Mrs Cunningham: I wish I could afford to sit back and just criticize, instead of having to do all this work and answer the phone.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, do you want to respond to that?

Mr Gary Wilson: In response to Ms Witmer, we have come up with what we find is the most accountable system for the respective labour market partners, and we're willing to stand by that.

The Chair: Yes, Mr Brown.

Mr Michael A. Brown (Algoma-Manitoulin): As I look at this amendment, I look at my own riding and my own experience. We do have a strong union labour force in my riding in some communities. In other communities—and this would be the bulk of the communities—there's a very rural area with small villages, small towns, typified by small businesses. It occurs to me that in areas of this province such as the ones I represent, there are workers who are being geographically disenfranchised by this insistence that all representatives come from organized

labour, because the fact is that there are not, in large parts of my riding, workforces in the private sector that are organized.

I'm concerned for the people who work in the small business community, generally very small employers; that they are not going to be able to, at the board level, make their concerns for rural and northern Ontario heard on a geographic basis. I understand that this is about organization, but the implication is that large areas of this province, from the worker perspective, are going to be disenfranchised because of the government's approach.

The second thing I would like to point out to you is that that approach will mean, I would suggest to you, that the workers who have the least ability through their particular employment situations to make representations to their employer or to community colleges or trainers of any sort, to get the appropriate training in their workplaces, can't do it. Unionized organizations have a mechanism—I don't know whether it's better—to speak directly to their employer, to negotiate collective agreements, with training involved in that collective agreement.

I would like some comments from the parliamentary assistant on how this is to impact on those workers in small businesses, the fastest-growing sector in our economy, on how they are to get their views known, given the fact that they don't have the mechanism of organized labour in their workplace to make the representations at contract time and given the fact that they're geographically spread out, a lot of them—again talking from my own particular experience—through large geographic sections.

I take the district of Manitoulin, for example. Off the top—there may be more—I can think of only one organized workplace in the private sector, and that happens to be a pseudo-public sector institution. It's a nursing home. How are those private sector workers from the rural areas to be represented, where population is dispersed and they're hard to service from training aspects anyway? That's more difficult, yet you're not finding a mechanism to represent them other than saying, "Well, gee whiz, the organized labour people have a soft spot in their heart for them and certainly will represent their interests." I find that kind of answer patronizing to those workers. I think they'd rather be at the table than be told somebody else will look out for them.

1040

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Brown, we've gone over some of this already, as you know. It might sound patronizing to you, but I can tell you, the people who haven't any contracts are inordinately grateful for things like minimum wage, unemployment insurance, medicare, health and safety regulations that organized labour has fought for over the years, and not only for organized workers but for all workers.

That's the first thing, but a very important thing, in that it gives, I would say, a lot of confidence, certainly to the government, that organized labour can represent the views of all working people of Ontario when it comes to training issues. And the training that people in the unorganized sector will need is similar to what workers in the organized

sector will need as well, so when it comes to representing their views around the table that OTAB represents, they will be well represented.

Mr Brown: What about the geographic concern I just expressed?

Mr Gary Wilson: Geography is one of the considerations of Ontario. As far as the appointments to the OTAB board are concerned, that will be one of the criteria used to make sure that the directors represent all the interests of the people of Ontario. It's a factor. There are the reference groups that will be established in the local boards, so that kind of system will make sure that all areas are represented.

Mr Brown: From your response, I understand that from the rural areas of this province we could expect at least the same number of directors representing workers as would be from the major centres. Could I understand that, if we're talking about geography?

Mr Gary Wilson: We haven't made the appointments yet, but when they are made, that is one of the things that is going to be taken into account: the diversity of Ontario's population and of its distribution.

I also want to point out to you paragraph 4(2)(c), the requirement that the distribution of "funding of labour force development programs and services go to all the regions of Ontario in a fair and appropriate manner." So that has certainly been considered and written into the legislation.

Mr Brown: I guess I don't have the same confidence that you're expressing. Apparently, the way we will know—because you're unwilling to put it in the legislation itself—that this is actually going to represent Ontario will be to look at the appointments that actually get made. I can tell you, I have a concern that the workers from the small business community, especially in rural areas, are not likely, from what you just told me, to receive the appropriate level of representation that they deserve on this important board, and that concerns me.

Mr Sutherland: I just want to add a couple of comments in response to Mr Brown. He says that in his area there are some sectors where there aren't a lot of unionized employees, but I think we need to understand that, pretty well, there are organized employees in all sectors of the economy. The type of training needs, yes, with some nuances, may vary a bit in terms of what they need for that sector, but the basic type of training systems are still going to be fairly well the same, whether you're a unionized employee or a non-unionized employee.

So in terms of being able to develop those effective training systems, which we're also talking about, the question is that those folks need to be able to access the training. They still can write to the board, they can write to their local board. There are all kinds of ways they can have input into the process. They don't necessarily have to be right there at the board. They can have input into the process in many different ways.

I just think of health and safety legislation and other things like that, where organized labour has clearly led the way and helped to improve working conditions for unorga-

nized labour. I think they've done a very good job in lobbying and improving the conditions for everyone.

Mr Steven Offer (Mississauga North): The agency collapsed. Do you not realize that the agency collapsed?

The Chair: Don't let these people distract you, Mr Sutherland.

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, I just want to say to you that you know that certainly in your riding, in the actual workplaces where health and safety really makes a difference, the conditions have improved substantially due to the result of efforts by organized labour over the years. I think the important thing is what is happening in the workplaces.

Mr Brown: Just quickly in response to Mr Sutherland, I want him to come out to Meldrum Bay and speak to Meldrum Bay outfitters at the far end of Manitoulin Island, and explain to them how this system is going to be better so that the person working at that shop can understand that he or she will be represented appropriately at the board.

This perhaps isn't the correct place, but when I look at my riding and look at the LTABs, I'm going to be having two LTABs serve my riding—at least that's what we're told—one from Sault Ste Marie and other from Sudbury. My people are living 300 kilometres from these LTABs. We have huge problems. The delivery of training into the rural areas is more difficult, more challenging. If you look at the composition of the board, I think you would have some reason to be nervous about how it will react to the reality in Meldrum Bay, Tehkummah, or Spanish or Massey.

The Chair: All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Ms Cunningham, please. I trust that you're moving that section 9 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"(4.1) In the selection of directors representing business, the importance of reflecting the different interests of small, medium and large businesses shall be recognized."

Mrs Cunningham: No, you're missing one, Mr Chairman.

The Chair: Especially in view of the fact that you're previous motion was defeated, so there is no (4.1). To move an amendment entitled (4.2)—so you're moving as I indicated?

Mrs Cunningham: No. I'm moving (4.2). I move that section 9 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection—

The Chair: But Ms Cunningham, the reason I took the liberty of changing the (4.2) to (4.1) is because it would only be (4.2) if your previous motion had passed. So this now becomes (4.1), correct?

Mrs Cunningham: I think you're right. I just want to make sure.

The Chair: I was trying to be helpful.

Mrs Cunningham: Absolutely. Thank you, Mr Chairman. That's very helpful.

The Chair: That having been moved by Ms Cunningham, go ahead, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: This is subsection 9(4.1). I move that section 9 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"(4.1) In the selection of directors representing business, the importance of reflecting the different interests of small, medium and large businesses shall be recognized."

Very quickly, I'll just say that certainly the intent of this motion with regard to the seven business directors reflects the same kind of concern out there among the workers of Ontario; that is, that all business sectors be represented within the group of seven directors; I guess I could even say eight directors. But I do want to very carefully put this motion forward because I think there is a consistency with regard to the concern when it comes to getting the best information and the best advice on the needs for training in the province of Ontario, not only the needs, but if we're really looking for input as an organization with regard to who can assist in the training across the province of Ontario, there's no doubt in our minds that we're going to be relying on small, medium, and large businesses.

1050

I think it's an opportunity for the government, certainly, to get the best advice from a very broad sector of our workforce. In order to do that and in order to make it specific with regard to our expectations and with regard to our desire to cross-reference the business group as far as possible, this would be the amendment that I would appreciate the government considering. I'd certainly be interested in hearing it's response.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. Mr Wilson, you're not in agreement with this motion?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

The Chair: Thank you. Mr Ramsay.

Mr David Ramsay (Timiskaming): This is really an excellent amendment, and it's an amendment that I hadn't brought forward. I would certainly support this because I think it's very important that OTAB not be dominated by big business. That would be a big mistake. You have to make sure, just like on the labour side and on the business side, people in the business community are thoroughly represented, both geographically and from size, because there is a tremendous difference between a big business and a small business and their needs.

I think it's a good idea to have that in the act so that you don't just rely upon the business steering group to bring forward representatives because the people who to date have been the organized are sort of the IBMs of the world, the big companies that up till now have had the funds to provide training, have really developed a training culture and a lot of small businesses haven't been able to do that. They run on very tight margins, they're very busy just trying to keep afloat, and they haven't had the luxury really to start to do that, but we know that all business has to get involved in training.

It's going to be very important that every part of the business community is represented here and probably espe-

cially more the smaller businesses than the big ones because the big ones have tended to provide training programs and the big ones have tended to be in partnership with organized labour. Of course, labour, rightly so, has been pushing training.

So a lot of the big companies with their organizations and their unions have been on top of training, but a lot of the medium-sized and small companies have not. So I would just say, make sure that you get a good mix on that business side from people who represent all business activity in Ontario.

Mrs Cunningham: I'd like the government to respond.

The Chair: Yes, one moment. I know you would and I'm sure they want to. Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: In response to the support for this amendment that we've heard, of course we do, and as I've mentioned before, the requirement is there through the appointments procedure to make sure that the directors do represent the diverse nature of Ontario.

The problem with writing in the description of the businesses is that raises the question of just what is a small, medium or large business. You kind of get hung up then on definitions. There are a number of definitions that are used.

The other thing is that the directors, and I refer here to all the directors, are going to bring their own experience to this. Apart from the requirement of the appointment procedure, there's also the intent and the determination that this OTAB does deliver the kind of training that we need.

Again, it hasn't worked that well to this point, in spite of what you say, Mr Ramsay. I mentioned in the hearings what Allan Taylor said about the training in the private sector, at least, that only 30% of the companies are doing it, and that is mainly at the executive and management levels. The front-line workers don't get it.

This is one of the reasons for including workers but also including the labour market partners, so that we do get that cross-section of views. This is the reason, the whole rationale, for including the labour market partners, for sharing this responsibility with them, that government doesn't have all the answers.

What we want to do is go out to the people who are actually in the field to find out what their needs are and what their experience is. This doesn't stop simply because somebody is the president of a company. Presumably they've worked their way up through various aspects, so they'll be bringing that experience, the same way with somebody who is representing the views of workers. They come from families. They might have a family member with a disability, for instance, who might be at work and be familiar with the lack of accommodation in his position. Again, this is the strength of this system in that it casts the net of experience so much wider. We can get all this experience and participation that will be so much more inclusive. In that sense, we think the way the legislation is written is more inclusive than what the amendment suggests.

Mrs Cunningham: I think that my colleagues on this committee are very much aware of this need, whether the government wants to in fact support it or not. We heard

from many boards of trade, the chambers of commerce, small and large business. They certainly seem to be able to define themselves. If the government hasn't made it its business to take a look at how in fact they do define themselves or how Statistics Canada defines small, medium and large businesses right now, I certainly think it's selective in the advice that it gets. I certainly don't have that information, because I didn't expect the parliamentary assistant to say that, but I did do a little bit of homework on one of the groups that I quoted yesterday, and I'll do a little bit more before the day's out, so that the government can at least have that information. I think being selective in what you want to know and what you want to hear is obvious in this meeting.

But, for myself, I do represent my constituency, and I do think this is the responsibility of all of us. We're not here to represent interest groups. The London Chamber of Commerce in fact did speak to all of the members from London and the member for Middlesex and put forward its concerns about representation. They did have fundamental concerns regarding the proposal to establish the Ontario training advisory board with regard to representation.

The structure of the board, they stated, "has basic flaws. The proposed model for representation of 'workplace partners' is wrong." I'm trying to bring these views to the committee. "The poor communications surrounding the OTAB project," to the date that we met with the chamber, all of us from London and Middlesex, "the rush to establish the provincial body," made people "deeply suspicious of the Ontario government's true agenda."

Mr Sutherland: The rush?

Mrs Cunningham: "The rush to establish the provincial body," and I have to say, the words "truly suspicious" are warranted, because they were suspicious that the government wouldn't be listening, that it wouldn't make any changes, and this will be the last amendment where we can in fact look at the change in the makeup of the OTAB. They blamed the federal government at that point in time, but we all know now that this has not been a direction of the federal government.

In fact, the province in its legislation has changed, at least in one regard, with regard to—I think it was the francophone representation, but I'm not sure which one's different. Could I be clarified on that? There's one seat that's different with regard to the original model. Did we not add another interest group?

Mr Peter Landry: Yes, francophones have been added and municipalities.

Mrs Cunningham: And municipalities.

Mr Landry: As ex officio.

Mrs Cunningham: As ex officio, that's right.

Interjection.

Mrs Cunningham: No, that isn't the point I'm trying to make. I am going to ask the question again, because I want to be clear myself. On the board itself, when we were going out for public hearings, is it exactly as it was when we went out for public hearings?

Mr Landry: With the local board panels and so on of last winter?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes.

Mr Landry: No, it has changed, based on the public hearings, by the addition of a francophone voting seat and the addition of a municipal, non-voting, ex officio seat as a level of government.

1100

Mrs Cunningham: I thought you were saying that they were both ex officio.

Mr Landry: No.

Mrs Cunningham: So as a result of those hearings, we did change the makeup of the board, and then of course the government backed off. They said we had to do it this way because this was the direction of the federal government, which is what I heard in many of the hearings, and that's why in fact there was no consultation on the governing body itself. It wasn't the intent to have consultation on the governing body. It was the intent of the government to have consultation on local boards, and all of the agendas that went out did say "local boards," and I certainly have a number of them. But that's beside the point. I'm talking about the London chamber.

"On the governing body," the chamber brings to our attention, "and in each of the councils outlined...business is given one third of the positions." They go further to say that with regard to partnerships and with regard to the business community, at least the London chamber felt that one half of the seats on the board should be given to business.

We did not bring forward that amendment, but we did bring forward an amendment in fact to reflect not only the London chamber's concern but many groups that appeared before the committee, and that was with regard to the makeup of the labour representatives: The eight directors ought to reflect in fact the makeup of our labour community, which is, to be generous, approximately 70% non-organized workers. We tried that; we failed.

We're now trying, on behalf of many representatives, to be consistent, to ask the government in fact that the eight seats be divided among small, medium and large businesses. The parliamentary assistant says that he doesn't know the definition of small, medium and large businesses. I would challenge the government in that regard. I'm sure that small and large businesses have been represented on many councils over the years here, and there would be some definition that could meet the satisfaction of the government.

I think the London chamber says it well, as did my colleague for Waterloo North, Elizabeth Witmer. With regard to the makeup of labour and the diversity that ought to be represented on the board and the makeup of the business community in London and the diversity that ought to be represented on the board, and I want to put these words on the record, in my view, and certainly as we were warned to this particular date when we in fact met with the London Chamber of Commerce, "This is at best an excuse by the government to be lazy." I think that it's very clear that their observations last spring, last fall and

early this winter have not changed and the government has proven it.

They went on to say, "There are numerous, non-union firms that have established communications systems for gathering the views of their employees, and such systems can be used to identify representatives of non-union employees with interests in training willing to serve on an OTAB or local board." The local boards in fact will have to do this.

If the local boards have to do it, I can't see one reason why the government of Ontario couldn't recognize that there is a mechanism for choosing representatives from non-organized workplaces and organized workplaces from small, medium and large business. Local boards will find a way. The only group that will not find a way in the province of Ontario is the government itself, because it takes work. It takes a lot of interest. There has to be a desire. There has to be a will, and this government, for whatever reasons, does not have that will. It's very obvious. "The government needs to be creative and seek these firms out to find out how to utilize such systems. If not the OTAB structure will be non-representative and a sham."

I'm reading that from Comments on the Proposal to Establish the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board and Associated Local Boards, prepared by the London Chamber of Commerce for presentation to the local boards consultation panel. That was the consultation local boards sent out to everybody: "We need your views on local boards." Certainly the intent of the government, we thought, was to look for a broad consultation on the OTAB structure itself. Not the communities; they were not asked to respond to the OTAB governing body.

This is dated April 7, 1992, in London, Ontario, and I have to tell you that everything they warned us about has become a reality: that the government would not listen, it would not take advice. It in fact did not seek out ways of having representation of business and labour on the governing body truly represent the business community and the labour community in Ontario. They were warned; they were told.

This is just one brief I'm reading; it happens to be my riding. I'd be most interested in listening to the member for Oxford and what he has been told in his constituency office, because I happen to know, and he knows it because they came to my office after they went to him—I'm now talking about the chamber. He knows that this is the view, and he's not representing the public, nor are other members who represent the government on this committee.

So I can tell you right now that in fact there will be sincere disappointment through chambers of commerce in the province of Ontario with regard to the makeup of the governing body and the local training boards if in fact we do not accept this amendment.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, please.

Mr Sutherland: I just want to say that I really resent the fact that a member would say I'm not representing my constituents or my public.

Mrs Cunningham: On this issue, we haven't even heard from you, so let's hear now.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, don't let yourself be distracted by other members of the committee.

Mr Sutherland: Let me just state for the record what I did, and I've tried to keep the two processes separate, unlike Ms Cunningham, who needs to realize that the local boards consultation panel wasn't strictly the OTAB process; the Canadian Labour Force Development Board was involved in that consultation as well. I took the document Skills to Meet the Challenge, called in a broad range of people from my community—labour, business, equity groups—and had a consultation right in my office to get their views—

Mrs Cunningham: Good for you. Some of us had 50 consultations.

Mr Sutherland: —summarized them and sent them on to the minister.

The Chair: One moment, please. This may be one of those 9 times out of 10, but it's very difficult for everybody here to hear what's being said when two people talk at the same time, notwithstanding how passionate people sometimes get.

Mr Sutherland: The other point is, I can read from briefs that tell the exact opposite of what Ms Cunningham has read from her briefs.

Mrs Cunningham: What about your riding? That was my issue.

The Chair: One moment. That doesn't solve the problem of people hearing what's being said; it makes it worse. Go ahead.

Mr Sutherland: The point of the matter is, I can cite from individual briefs that would say the exact opposite of the briefs that Ms Cunningham has put forward. The reality is, what you've got to work out is a compromise among all those groups. That is what has been worked out. Maybe some of the groups aren't happy with all the compromise, maybe Ms Cunningham isn't happy with the compromise, but that's the reality of the situation and we need to go from there.

Mrs Cunningham: Could I ask, Mr Chairman, on these hearings that we've been responsible for in the last four weeks, could I ask, as a result of the public input to these hearings, could I ask to this point, could I specifically ask the member for Oxford, what compromise has been made?

The Chair: You may put that to the committee. If Mr Sutherland wants to respond, he can.

Mr Sutherland: No, I'm not going to respond because I think a great deal of consultation has gone on, and went on before we even got to the hearings, and a lot of work done. I think we've tried to respond as best as possible and I think we've got a good process. We need to go forward.

1110

The Chair: That, Mr Sutherland, was a response. Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Could I ask a subsequent question, then? Could I ask Mr Sutherland how he's going to

explain to the public the \$53,000 that we spent? And what was the purpose of the public hearings of the standing committee of the Legislative Assembly if we're not looking at further input and compromise? What was the purpose of these hearings?

The Chair: Ms Witmer?

Mrs Witmer: I'd just like to respond to Mr Wilson. Mr Wilson indicated, when asked, and Ms Cunningham spoke to the amendment, that it was important that we reflect the different interests of small, medium and large businesses. He indicated that there was some difficulty in coming up with the definition of small, medium and large business.

Well, I would say there's some inconsistency, because the government has certainly been able to come up with a definition in the area of pay equity and employment equity and also in the area of employment equity when we talk about the disabled. Those are all definitions that they have been able to find, and yet he's saying: "Well, we can't do that. It's just not possible to do so." So I would say there is some inconsistency. They have certainly demonstrated that they've been able to do that in the past in other pieces of legislation.

Mr Gary Wilson: Actually, what I did say was that there is a disagreement on the definitions of those terms. Ms Cunningham mentioned Statscan's definition. I think that's the organization that declared that the recession was over a couple of months ago, so whatever comes out of there isn't necessarily agreed on either.

Mrs Cunningham: That's a dumb comment. That's a stupid comment. Withdraw it.

Mrs Witmer: It's never stopped you coming out with a definition.

Mr Gary Wilson: In our view—

Mr Huget: Mr Chairman, on a point of order.

Mr Gary Wilson: —it's more productive to talk about the approach that will represent the diversity of business, just as we expect the diversity of Ontario's population to be represented through the consultation with the various labour market partners and the appointments process as well.

But I wanted to say that the consultation, this idea that the government has been lazy—well, it might be true; we might be hoping that by luck we'll come upon a system that works better than the one we have now. Certainly, I think doing anything is, in the view of a lot of people, better than letting what goes on now continue. So we could be depending on that. But I think that from what we've heard of the work of the OTAB project team, the universal appreciation and acknowledgement that they have worked very hard in the consultation process at the two levels, one for OTAB as well as the local boards, to come up with a system that will work for all of Ontario, we can't be accused of being lazy.

But in the final analysis, it will depend on how well the system works. We think that by sharing responsibility with the labour market partners we will get the representation that covers all of Ontario.

Mr Huget: On a point of order, we have a member of our committee who uses an interpreter in order to participate in and follow these proceedings. I would ask the members of the third party if they would take that into consideration and please allow the conversations to go as they should. It's very difficult for us to follow all the bantering back and forth. I would just ask somebody to consider that.

The Chair: Mr Malkowski, please.

Mr Gary Malkowski (York East): On a point of privilege, if I may: I don't think it's acceptable to use interpreters as an excuse, though, as the only reason for limiting the conversation. I think we can't single out the interpreters as the excuse for taking turns properly.

The Chair: Quite right. All of us have difficulty understanding when two or three or four or five people talk at the same time. Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I'm happy that Mr Malkowski brought that to our attention because there are a lot of interjections in any committee meeting. It's hard for all of us, no matter what our abilities or disabilities are. But I was asked by Mr Huget to try and be more controlled in my responses, and so I said to him that I would. I do think we need to be reminded for everybody, not just for Gary, and I will do that. Mr Chairman, I have to tell you that it is very difficult.

The Chair: You don't have to tell me that, Mrs Cunningham. Mr Martin.

Mr Tony Martin (Sault Ste Marie): I also want to comment. I come here sometimes under great duress because of the way that we operate with each other from time to time. I know we take great criticism in our home communities because of the level of decorum and respect that's often given to one another. When I come here and hear somebody refer to somebody else's comment as stupid, I don't even use that language with my children and I have to tell you it gives me great concern. It makes me wonder if in fact we will arrive at something here by way of an outcome that will be good for the people of Ontario. I just put that on the record.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Huget, please.

Mr Huget: Very briefly, I would like to thank Mrs Cunningham for having the discussion that we've had in the last couple of minutes. My concern was not to single out Mr Malkowski, but also I think to deal with specifically the interpreter, who is valiantly trying to follow the conversations, as was Hansard.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Huget. Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Kormos, perhaps to end this discussion on a point that was near the beginning, I would like to ask Mr Landry to clarify his comments to Mrs Cunningham over the issue of what changes were made as a result of the consultation.

The Chair: By all means.

Mr Landry: My response to Mrs Cunningham was focused on the number of board members and the changes to the numbers, so the increase of francophones and municipalities. But I think it is worth mentioning that we

made another change that didn't affect the numbers but allowed for people with disabilities to have an alternate on the board should they choose. Not only the people representing people with disabilities, but anybody who happened to be on the board with a disability has the right to have an alternate to act should they be absent or unable to act.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Can I ask a subsequent question from that, then? Does that change of direction, which I approve of, appear in the act?

Mr Landry: Yes. Subsection 9(10) says, "On the request of any director who is a person with a disability, the Lieutenant Governor in Council may appoint an alternate who shall perform the duties and have the powers of the director when that director is absent or unable to act."

Mr Malkowski: Can we just back up? On a point of clarification, can you say what section number this was again, please?

Mr Landry: Subsection 9(10), "Alternates."

The Chair: Are you finished?

Mr Landry: I am finished.

The Chair: Thank you. Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: I thank the government for that clarification for a couple of reasons. It just goes to show you that in spite of the lack of direction from the government with regard to the openness around looking for input to the makeup of the OTAB governing body, they in fact did get some good advice and they took it. I think that was part of an open consultation process which I certainly was part of.

I do want to make a couple of comments with regard to the last numbers of interchanges. I didn't think that I did put on the record the word "stupid" with regard to Mr Wilson's remarks about Stats Canada making some direction or making some statement about the recession being over and that therefore Stats Canada isn't a source that we ought to take seriously. I would just say that Mr Wilson's comment—I don't think I was on the record at all, but if I can be on the record—was irresponsible because in fact the public of Ontario and Canada spend a lot of money looking for the best statistical information that we can get in this country, and Stats Canada has made significant improvements and considerable advances in its technology and in its information-gathering. I think all governments across certainly this country and certainly across the world look to Statistics Canada for the best information they can get.

I think it was probably a comment in jest on behalf of the parliamentary assistant, and he's smiling, therefore I think sometimes that's a perfect indication of what goes on in this committee from time to time. Most of us walk out of this room with the same kind of regard and respect we've always had for each other in this very tough job. I just want to put that on the record. The parliamentary assistant and I have known each other for a couple of years and we've always gotten along just fine. He has a job to do right now and so do I, and I'm trying to do it.

1120

I think the other comment that was made was with regard to this legislation, and again I don't think the parliamentary assistant would like me to—not challenge him, because I'm giving him an opportunity to clarify something he said and that is that anything is better than we have now. I would say to that comment, that anything is better than what we have now, again is not a responsible statement for the parliamentary assistant to the minister to make. It is our opportunity, a golden opportunity, especially for this government, to come forward with the best legislation that will affect the training of our young people and the retraining of our workers in this province. This is a golden opportunity, and I think we should be striving, first of all, to set up the best governing body, the best OTAB we can and striving to get the support of the public and the support of those whom we will rely on so heavily to make this work.

That is why I have been bringing forward, as have my colleagues, the amendments we've been bringing forward to this date, to make things better. We just really believe they will make it better. We also strongly feel that if the government is going to have public hearings and if people are going to go to the extent of putting together the best advice they can—there is just some of it. You see me carrying this around. These are the briefs we singled out that gave forward a consensus of opinion according to the research, actually. We used the research that was put together for the committee, pulled out those briefs and tried in fact to put them into groupings, took the majority of opinions and brought them forward where there was consensus on behalf of the presenters.

That is why, when I brought forward some of the amendments on the makeup of the board, I didn't take all the amendments that were put forward to me even by the London Chamber of Commerce. I didn't use everything they would have liked me to put forward. I have to tell you one group that will be particularly disappointed, because it spent a lot of time following these hearings, is the teachers in the province of Ontario. We received numbers of briefs, and more recently, I received more today from individual school boards. If this committee could only understand that it has been the driving force behind training in the province of Ontario. They took it very seriously. Groups of teachers, school board trustees, curriculum writers, trainers within school boards, liaison people with boards who have been working in the training sector now for 20, 30 years put committees together. They took this process very seriously and they put their briefs together and they said, "At the very least, let the boards across this province be recognized as considerable players in this whole area of skills training."

You know, this government literally ignored the school boards. You can say what you like about two seats and people getting together, but they weren't chosen. They feel they have a very different perspective to bring to the table than community trainers or universities or colleges. The colleges and the trainers were chosen. That's fine, but they do feel they've been left out. At the very least, the government could have put forward one more seat for education,

and it didn't. The briefs that we're all getting now, I'm sure you're getting the same ones I am, because they're coming from the clerk. Some are coming to me individually because of the fact that I happen to be the critic and I try to get them to the clerk's office so everybody can see them.

I am just saying that the criticism and sort of the off-handedness and the responses that we're getting in our role—and yes, I'm a bit insulting from time to time. I've put a lot of work into this. It's been my particular responsibility, within our party and within our caucus, to do that. But others have as well and this is serious business. This isn't a place where we come to throw things back and forth. I know what Mr Martin's saying and I tried to respond to that comment. But we're working very hard in this process and I think the government has been particularly unresponsive during these committee hearings. I do feel that ultimately you will receive a just criticism. Quite frankly, I don't blame this on the parliamentary assistant, but I will blame it on the new minister and I will be asking you, Mr Chairman, that the new minister come before this committee before these deliberations are over. I think it's incumbent upon him to hear from the opposition critics with regard to how we feel the process has moved forward and how we feel about the response of the government during these public hearings.

I know Mr Cooke. I have worked quite closely with him in the last couple of years in my position as whip for the party and certainly during the annexation hearings in London. Something has happened, in my view, because it wouldn't be his style; it wouldn't be something I would expect that he would buy into. I don't feel that in his new position as the Minister of Education and Training, he can afford to ignore the input of the public during three weeks of public hearings. I think that, quite frankly, the parliamentary assistant has probably been given his marching orders and the deputy has probably been given his as well and they've been saying: "Don't make any changes. It won't make a difference."

Well, it may not make a difference; I don't know. I'm expecting and hoping that all of us, no matter what happens during these hearings, will move forward and make this thing work. That is the bottom line for me. But it would work much better if the public in Ontario and all of these people put forward their suggestions and could at least be assured that the government had reasonable responses to our requests for amendments, and it simply doesn't.

Thank you, Mr Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. We're going to have a 10-minute recess. Thank you kindly.

The committee recessed at 1128 and resumed at 1147.

The Chair: We should resume now, please. Is there any further debate on Mrs Cunningham's motion? There being no further debate on Mrs Cunningham's motion, all in favour please indicate. All opposed? Mrs Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Is there any debate regarding section 9 of the bill?

Interjection: Recorded vote.

The Chair: I'm sorry, recorded vote.

All in favour of section 9 of the bill please raise their hand and keep their hand raised until their name is called.

Ayes

Haeck, Huget, Malkowski, Martin, Sutherland, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands).

The Chair: All opposed, please indicate. Keep your hand raised until your name is called.

Nays

Brown, Cunningham, Offer, Ramsay, Witmer.

The Chair: We're now addressing section 10 of the bill.

Mr Ramsay: Just to make a comment, Mr Kormos. After hearing all the first nations groups that came before us, I had prepared a motion to delete this. But upon hearing on just about the very last day the Métis association spokesperson, I decided that I would leave this in. I just want to put on the record that this would allow the opportunity for any native group at some time to come into OTAB if it so wished.

The Chair: Thank you, sir.

All in favour of section 10 of the bill, please indicate.

Mrs Cunningham: I don't have it in front of me; I'm sorry.

Mr Ramsay: It's just the bill.

The Chair: Opposed? Section 10 of the bill carries.

We are addressing section 11 of the bill. Is there any discussion or debate around section 11 of the bill?

All in favour of section 11 of the bill, please indicate. Opposed?

Section 11 of the bill carries.

1150

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, subsection 12(2). I move that subsection 12(2) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Public meetings

"(2) The directors' meetings shall be open to the public, except that confidential personnel matters shall be dealt with in private."

I think that many of us heard the necessity for this institution to be deliberating in public. They're accountable to the public. We certainly recognize the fact that confidential personnel matters in any public body would be excluded from public meetings and held in camera. We recognize that.

There were many who were extremely concerned about the fact that the intent of the government was that just two directors' meetings shall be open to the public. In that regard, Mr Chairman, I would ask that we hear from the government on this amendment, and that they also, in their response, put on the record as to why they chose the number two.

Mr Gary Wilson: The reason for two is to suggest a minimum and certainly not a maximum. It's up to the board itself. As I say, we want to share responsibilities, so the board will have a lot of discretion in how it conducts

its meetings. It's a matter that will be addressed in the bylaws, not in legislation, as far as the public meetings that are held are concerned. Certainly, as you say, we heard a lot of people asking about the public nature of that, and as we pointed out in those hearings, two is only a minimum. It's not to say that's how many there should be.

As far as the specific wording of your amendment is concerned, you mentioned confidential personnel matters, but there could be other matters that might need to be addressed in a private meeting, so that's why it's difficult to specify. There are other matters too that can be addressed, as far as say the release of the minutes and reports, which can be public as well.

We think the way this is worded, it is just a minimum. The public nature of it then should be addressed by the board itself through its bylaws, which again, the government has a lot of influence on.

Mr Offer: To add to the debate, I think you should recognize that many people with a great many years of experience have made the point that when one puts in phrases like "At least every two months there shall be a meeting," or "At least two directors' meetings shall be open to the public," that in practice becomes not the minimum but the maximum. That becomes what in fact turns out to be the practice.

I think concerns around a variety of issues will continually bring up that issue. It's not just in dealing with this bill but in others. There is a real fragility that you incorporate when you say "There shall be at least..." because in practice that then becomes, as a minimum, the maximum. You will not get more than two public meetings a year. That's what will happen in practice. You will not have more than a meeting every two months. That will become the maximum.

The question of substance is, why is this necessary when the impact will be that you are not creating a base-ment, you are creating an attic? That's the top level you're going to get. I think you are just flying in the face of what I expect you want to accomplish.

Mrs Witmer: I would certainly support this motion. I think we need to be encouraging the meetings to be public meetings. Since obviously OTAB is going to be responsible for most of the publicly funded training in this province, and since it's also going to be spending significant, huge sums of taxpayers' money, I think it's absolutely essential that in order to show some accountability to the electorate and also to the taxpayers, the taxpayers have an opportunity to either attend the meetings or receive the minutes of the meetings.

I would agree with Mr Offer. I think if you set a number, two, that's exactly how many public meetings there will be, only two. As I say, this is public money. There needs to be accountability. I don't see this being any different than a school board or a municipality. I believe the public has a right to know what's going on and what decisions are being made on their behalf.

Mr Brown: Further to that point, I think the issue of accountability for a board administering these large dollars is one of public concern, as it has been taken out of the

elected officials' realm and subjected to an appointed board.

The issue, I think, goes beyond saying that two meetings should be open or that all meetings should be open. What I would like the parliamentary assistant to address is the issue of how the public knows when the meetings are. You can have closed public meetings by just not indicating to the public when the open public meeting is, if you follow me. There is a necessity for notice, for the public to know when the meeting is occurring and where it will occur, in order that people in the general public, people in concerned groups and individuals can actually attend a public meeting. A public meeting is only public if the public knows when and where it is. I would ask how that is to be addressed.

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Brown, if you're suggesting OTAB will gain the public confidence by playing shell games like that, I think we all recognize that's not going to work, that you hold a public meeting and then not have it carried out. The point is, what we've done here is made sure in the Legislature that there will be public meetings. However, the number has to be addressed in the bylaws.

This is a government agency that's designed to carry out a specific function, that is, to improve training in the province. It's got to find ways of doing that successfully. As I say, it's got to enjoy the public confidence to do it successfully. By putting this in the legislation, at least some meetings will be open to the public. The exact number will be addressed in the bylaws, and the government has control over that. There still is the openness through the freedom of information act that applies to this agency as well. So there's ample scope for public monitoring of what OTAB is doing.

Mr Brown: Mr Wilson, I wasn't suggesting for a moment that they were going to play a shell game. All I was asking was how the public will know; what is the mechanism whereby the people of Ontario can be assured through this legislation that in fact people have access to the public meetings. I wasn't suggesting for one moment that a board would intentionally do this, but I want an assurance in the legislation itself of what kind of notice the public may get. You're not prepared to give any assurance that the public has access to the information surrounding an upcoming meeting.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said, Mr Brown, the effectiveness of OTAB will depend on its public accountability, that is, whether it's doing its job. The actual nature or the time and place is an administrative matter that will be met by the bylaws, not through the legislation.

Mr Brown: I find that not to be terribly satisfactory. If the ministry wants to proceed in that fashion, then it should be presenting the bylaws or regulations in front of this committee right now so that we would know and have some assurance that what you're saying is in fact the case. My experience with regulations is that committees of the Legislature seldom see those. We seldom have the opportunity to debate them. If we cannot assure it in the legislation, surely the ministry would be prepared to table today the regulations that are to accompany this bill, so that I

may be assured that the point I'm making is being addressed. I have no way of knowing that as a legislator and that offends me.

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Brown, what we're trying to do here is establish the governing board for OTAB, and the regulations can't be described until the board is formed.

1200

Mr Offer: There is no provision in the bill for regulations.

Mr Brown: My colleague just points out to me that there's no section here that permits the regulations on this matter. It's not being addressed. I don't see the ability to make those regulations for public notice in the bill. How does that happen?

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Brown, you've raised the question of the bylaws, which is what covers this matter as far as the public meetings go, not the regulations.

Mr Brown: Maybe you could help me here. How does this work? You talk about bylaws; I talk about regulations. They're obviously different. Maybe you could just explain to me what the difference is and how this in fact works.

Mr Gary Wilson: The bylaws refer to the time and place of meetings, for instance, the ones that will be open to the public.

Mr Brown: And who sets those?

Mr Gary Wilson: The board of OTAB will set those.

Mr Brown: So the board of OTAB will determine the bylaws?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

Mr Brown: But there will be regulations accompanying this bill, I assume.

Mr Gary Wilson: For other purposes. That's right.

Mr Brown: I'll just rest my case, Mr Chair, on the premise that for a board that is charged with such a responsibility and such a large number of dollars, I think it would behoove the government to be looking at a way that we could have some level of comfort, that this is fully open, and that people will have the opportunity to know when, where and what will be discussed at these board meetings.

Mr Offer: Just to add to the comments of Mr Brown, could you please explain to the committee what is anticipated in the area of notice?

Mr Gary Wilson: Notice of public meetings, you mean?

Mr Offer: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: I guess that's going to be set by the board.

Mr Offer: I know it's going to be set by the board. I can read that. I understand that. The question I have is, what is envisioned by the government in terms of the type and form of notice you would expect to be set by the board?

Mr Gary Wilson: Those details haven't all been worked out, Mr Offer, but at the same time, they're going to be adequate to meet the need of informing the public

about public meetings. I think that's quite clear. As I say, if OTAB is going to enjoy any kind of confidence by the public, then it's got to carry on in a way the public can be confident about.

Mr Offer: In a matter like this, I recognize full well the difficulty of setting in legislation what the notice shall contain, where it shall be and how it shall be, but I also can't understand why there can't be a provision in the legislation that says a notice must be given. There's just nothing in the bill that even speaks to the issue of notifying the public.

I understand how the drafters of the legislation will say, "We can't dot all the i's and cross all the t's," but surely there can be a broad direction that the principle of notice to the public will be embraced in the legislation, the particulars of which are yet to be decided but the principle of which is accepted. There's nothing in the bill that speaks of this. They just say there's going to be a couple of meetings periodically.

Mr Gary Wilson: That speaks very directly that they have to be open.

Mr Offer: The point that's made is, you can have a meeting which is open to the public, but we're not talking about the meeting at this point being open to the public; we're talking about the public being notified that the meeting is open to the public. It's different. It's like sitting down for a dinner and saying, "Well, sit down with a table and some chairs." You're responding to the table; we're saying you've got to have some chairs.

Mr Gary Wilson: We think it's implied in the way the legislation is written that the meetings will indeed be open.

Mr Offer: Okay, if you don't embrace the principle, you don't embrace the principle.

Mrs Cunningham: Just to bring to the attention of committee members the recommendation of the Ontario school board sector working group that this amendment be put to ensure that all meetings of the OTAB governing body are open to the public. I think this in fact is a perfect example of where school boards can be helpful with regard to their experiences in skills training, development and education programs.

We all know about these kinds of requirements for open access to school board meetings, meaning that the public are there to witness if they want, because this is a body that is paid for by the taxpayers: Presentations are dealt with in public; appeals, as long as it's not a personnel matter; appeals around a decision to move forward with a certain program; any reports and information.

We're looking for a well-informed public, anyone who wants to audit or monitor meetings as currently exist here in this committee right now, unless we were to go in camera for personnel matters. To my knowledge, there aren't any meetings of publicly funded bodies that would be held in camera except for personnel and property. We didn't put property in because we didn't think that this particular board would deal in property; we thought about it. We would give them the credit if they had to deal in property to move to in camera. Those are the two examples,

personnel and property matters for school boards, for municipalities, and by practice, the Council of Regents.

The YMCA: I thought it was interesting that they brought it to our attention. I think that's the group that's particularly interested in openness, and the ONE-STEP, the Ontario Network of Employment Skills Training Projects, also recommended that all meetings of the OTAB governing body should be open to the public.

When I first saw this, I thought it was a mistake, because it's such a giant leap backwards. The expectation in any legislation governing a body of this significance would be that it follow the practices of any public body, and that is that it go in camera for personnel and property matters. In this instance, we very carefully didn't put property in because we're not looking at this governing agency as being involved in property but, more importantly, in programs.

One goes back to the very beginning of the bill, which is always important for us to do. "The bill establishes the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board...a crown agency which is to assume broad responsibility for the promotion, funding, coordination, design and provision of programs and services with respect to labour force training and adjustment." You tell me why we wouldn't be having all of the meetings held in public.

The Chair: All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. All those opposed, please indicate.

Mr Brown: We'd like a recorded vote.

The Chair: It's nice to call for that at the beginning of the vote being called. All those in favour, please raise their hands and keep their hands raised.

Mr Sutherland: Sorry, can you repeat what the motion is, Mr Chair.

The Chair: It's Ms Cunningham's motion.

Mr Sutherland: Okay, fair enough.

Ayes

Brown, Cunningham, Offer, Witmer.

Nays

Haack, Huget, Malkowski, Martin, Sutherland, G. Wilson.

Mrs Cunningham: Are we going further now? I have an appointment at 12.

The Chair: It is 12:10. On Monday, it had been put to the committee that the schedule would be revised so that we would sit from 10 till 12:30 today and through till 5:30 so as to compensate for the two hours that we lost on Wednesday morning, which is why we sat till 5:30 yesterday and till 12:30 on the day prior, Tuesday. Do you want a brief recess?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes. I need a recess. I've got a phone call set up, and I need to make it.

The Chair: Recess for five minutes, please.

The committee recessed at 1211 and resumed at 1217.

The Chair: All right, we shall resume.

Mrs Witmer: I would like to move that subsection 12(3) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:
"Quorum

"(3) Fourteen directors, five of whom represent business and five of whom represent labour, are required to constitute a quorum.

"Decision-making

"(4) A decision of the directors requires the approval of 14 directors, five of whom represent business and five of whom represent labour."

The reason and intent behind this amendment, which really of course is the double majority voting requirement, is that any proposal that would be put before the OTAB board would have to be supported by a majority of both business and labour and, therefore, a majority of the complete board.

I think we've seen the problems if you don't have this type of double majority voting requirement at the bipartite Workplace Health and Safety Agency. Certainly, there has been a demonstration there of the difficulty of decision-making when you have a joint labour-management organization. That agency, as we know, was created two years ago, and it certifies and it sets training standards for the 100,000 job safety staff required at the present time in all Ontario workplaces with more than 20 employees.

The instruction was to begin last spring. However, that was stalled because of the labour-management disagreement over how many core training hours each safety officer would receive. Most of us know that labour wanted 120 hours while business proposed fewer hours and special consideration for some low hazard industries.

That dispute could not be resolved at the bipartite Workplace Health and Safety Agency and, as a result, five of the nine business representatives resigned and there was a call for the resignation of the management co-chair because they argued that he no longer represented the interests of business. The business representatives, of course, believed that the Minister of Labour had interfered and that he had leaned on the co-chairman to swing his vote in favour of the adopted proposal, which creates really a three-tier program ranging from a minimum of one week's training to a maximum of three weeks.

Certainly, it was the experience at the Workplace Health and Safety Agency that prompted John Howatson of the Canadian Manufacturers' Association to demand safeguards, as did many of the other presenters that appeared before us, against one group overwhelming another by the requirement of a double majority in voting. This would then require a proposal to be supported by a majority of both business and labour and a majority of the complete board.

1220

Bill 96 will have the same types of problems if it doesn't have this double majority voting requirement safeguard. Unfortunately, the government has left the decision-making procedures to be determined at a later date by regulation.

We had the Ontario Chamber of Commerce point out that legislation at the present time relies on consensus decision-making, but they expressed concern because there was no indication of how that consensus is to be defined and achieved. They were concerned that this casualness about the decision-making process is an

invitation for disaster—experienced, of course, as I've indicated, at the Workplace Health and Safety Agency.

The chamber went on to say: "We do not believe that anybody can in good conscience support the bill without knowing what the decision-making process will be....People do, with good intentions and clear conscience, sometimes disagree with each other. There will be occasions where there will be substantial disagreement on the governing body, yet the act is silent on how those agreements are to be resolved. If OTAB is to be given decision-making powers, it is essential that both of the workplace partners, workers and employers, support any major initiatives."

The OTAB business steering committee also recommended that a double majority voting requirement be placed in the legislation. Certainly, because of past experience with the Workplace Health and Safety Agency and because of the request by many of the presenters that appeared before us, employees and employers, I would hope that the government would support this double majority voting requirement. However, I have a question for Mr Wilson.

Mr Wilson, have there been discussions with the partners regarding the double majority voting requirement, and has the government already given quietly their assurance, or even in writing, that there will be a double majority voting requirement?

Mr Gary Wilson: There certainly have been discussions on how the voting will proceed, but the reason it's not written out in the legislation is that it more properly belongs in regulations.

The other thing is that what we're trying to do is set up a model that will encourage as much consensus as possible so that that will become the guiding rule, and some other mechanisms that would encourage reaching a consensus before things came to a vote.

In any case, certainly there are discussions to make sure all the labour market partners have a role in decision-making, however it is achieved.

Mrs Witmer: I'm going to ask you again: Has any group been given assurance in writing that there will be a requirement that there will be a double majority, to your knowledge?

Mr Gary Wilson: You suggest it was done quietly. In fact, there was a letter written to outline what our thinking is about the voting procedure, and it would be a double majority plus two of the other groups.

Mrs Witmer: So a letter has been circulated to people in this province indicating that that is the direction the government intends to go at the present time, or is that a guarantee to people in this province that indeed there will be a double majority plus two?

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, again, the decision-making procedure will be laid out in the regulations. The regulations can be written only after the governing board is established, so in that sense, there can't be any guarantees at this point. It's again a matter of discussion with the labour market partners and the government.

Mrs Witmer: I guess I'm wondering why the government is so reluctant to put this into the bill, knowing that there have been severe problems created in the operation of the Workplace Health and Safety Agency.

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, we think there will be more problems that are created. For instance, in the way it's written out in your amendment, this would rule out the other groups, including the educators and trainers whom you are claiming to represent so strongly. Yet in the voting mechanism that you lay out in the legislation, you would deprive them of any say in voting matters and even in quorum.

Mrs Witmer: We're simply dealing here with the two major groups who have traditionally been in confrontation and asking that at least there's a double majority from those two groups.

Mr Gary Wilson: But you've done it in a way that excludes the other people who have been historically excluded from issues surrounding training, and this is what we're trying to do: bring them in. You, as I say, made a very strong representation on behalf of a group that you are now about to exclude from a very important process.

Mrs Witmer: Those people will not be excluded. We're simply saying that in order to avoid what has happened in the past, this would be our recommendation.

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, certainly we're trying to do that and have set up this partnership, but not at the exclusion of other groups that have been historically excluded, which is what your amendment does.

The Chair: Mr Offer, please.

Mr Offer: Speaking to this matter, it's similar to a motion of amendment which I'm hopefully going to be presenting in the afternoon, but the parliamentary assistant and staff will know, in response to the question specifically put forward by Ms Witmer, that there is in fact a written confirmation by the Minister of Skills Development, Richard Allen. That is under date February 2. It is to the steering committee chairs, the labour market partners, and it has indicated that there will be a double majority. The question is—ministry staff shake their heads. It just indicates, and I read right from the letter:

"Only where consensus cannot be achieved, and where any other intermediate steps have failed to yield an acceptable resolution, would an issue come to a final vote. For any motion to be confirmed in that vote, it would require the support of a majority of the full board (at least 12 of 22), including a majority of the business representatives (five of eight), a majority of the labour representatives (five of eight), plus a vote from each of at least two of the remaining five labour market partner groups. These are the requirements for an affirmation. Failure to meet any of these requirements would result in the defeat of the motion." This is signed by your minister.

The minister of the crown has sent this letter to the major participants in this process. He has indicated that if consensus can't be achieved, then this is how the voting shall take place. The question is—and I understand all about memorandums of understanding and all of those things—why cannot the voting procedure, as was stipulated by the

minister of the crown who is in charge of this legislation, be put in the legislation?

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, as I said in my answer to Mrs Witmer, the problem with putting it in the legislation is that it risks becoming the process of working. I think you yourself strongly argued in the earlier amendment that this is what would happen, so you understand well the implications of doing that. In this matter which is so important, because that is not the only way of deciding issues, we are basing this on a consensual approach. That is what we are encouraging—consensus—before the need for voting happens.

Mr Offer: Mr Parliamentary Assistant, all of the labour market partners know that this is the process that's going to be followed. The minister has already indicated this. The issue that you bring forward as to whether there's going to be consensus or not because of a vote has already been laid to rest, because the minister has indicated that if consensus can't be achieved, this is the way the vote's going to take place. So the thing that you've just said is history. The minister has already indicated that there will be a double majority requirement if consensus can't be achieved.

What we are saying is, we surely do hope that consensus will be able to be achieved, but the fact of the matter is that all of the participants know, as they sit around the table, that if consensus can't be achieved, they're going to take this letter out and say, "Okay, let's have the vote." We are saying that it seems much more proper that if these are the words of the minister who was then in charge of this legislation and was able to sign his name to the bottom, then surely for all those people who want to put some faith and trust and hope in the OTAB process, that should be found in legislation. Surely it should. And if you can't understand how and why it should, then I'm sorry. As legislators, we should be, more than anybody, aware of the majority rules in this place, and the minister of the crown has indicated this. All of the partners know that if they can't arrive at a consensual agreement, then these words must kick in. We are saying that in order to ensure that the

words of the minister are followed, these words should be found in legislative form. There is absolutely no argument that could be made against that unless you are saying the minister was incorrect.

Mr Gary Wilson: The minister is not incorrect at all. What he has done is laid out one of the possibilities for the—

Mr Offer: No, not at all.

Mr Gary Wilson: I say one of the possibilities, because you're highlighting the voting aspect, but he mentions consensus as being the preferred route, and then there's also a mediation process that he refers to in that letter.

Mr Offer: I agree. I accept all of that. But the fact of the matter is that the minister has said we hope to have an agreement, we hope to have a mediation, and if we don't have that, then we're going to have a vote, and if we have a vote, this is how it's going to follow. I'm saying that's well and good. I say let's follow what your minister said. Your boss said this. Let's follow this. Put it in legislation. Let the world be able to rely on the words of the minister. Hopefully there will be consensus, and if not consensus, then mediation, and then, if not mediation, look to the legislation. That can all be done by a memorandum of understanding, because all of the members who are at the table will know that's the process that has got to be followed.

Why would you be so afraid of putting in legislation the words of the minister? I'll tell you why: because this can be changed, that's why. Please, that's the reason. The reason that you don't want to put it in legislation is because this can be changed and legislation can't be, and the labour market partners should be very concerned when members of the government are afraid to put in legislative form the words of their own minister. There's only one conclusion that could be drawn, and that is that this, when this is passed, is going to be changed.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. We are recessed until 2 o'clock.

The committee recessed at 1232.

AFTERNOON SITTING

The committee resumed at 1407.

The Chair: It's 2:07. We will continue to wait for a quorum. Thank you.

The committee recessed at 1407 and resumed at 1410.

The Vice-Chair (Mr Bob Huget): It's 2:10. A quorum is now present. We were debating a Progressive Conservative motion on subsection 12(3). Mr Offer had the floor. He still has the floor.

Mr Offer: As I indicated earlier, I was in support of the amendment put forward by Mrs Cunningham and indeed had spoken in support of that amendment by using the words of the minister of the crown. I believe I had said all that's required to be said on this amendment at this point in time and as such will leave any further comment for other amendments.

The Vice-Chair: Any further comment? All those in favour of Mrs Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Those opposed? The motion is defeated.

Mr Ramsay, you have a motion?

Mr Ramsay: Yes. I move that subsections 12(2) and (3) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Public meetings

"(2) The directors' meetings shall be open to the public, except that confidential personnel matters shall be dealt with in private.

"Quorum

"(3) The following are required to constitute a quorum:

"1. Five directors representing business.

"2. Five directors representing labour.

"3. Three directors representing the other groups named in subsection 9(2), and the group named in section 10 if an additional director has been appointed under that section."

I believe that's to the deal with native people.

"Decision-making."

I'd like to make an amendment to my amendment here, if that is in order, because I was basing this number, 13 directors, on a previous amendment that I hoped would have been passed. Since it didn't, I'd like to just amend that to 12 right now to keep it consistent with the bill in its present form. Subsection (4) would then read:

"(4) A decision of the directors requires the approval of twelve—not 13—"directors, five of whom represent business and five of whom represent labour."

Is that in order, to amend my own amendment?

The Vice-Chair: I believe it is. The advice from the clerk is that it is in order. Do you wish to speak to your motion?

Mr Ramsay: Yes. I know that before the lunch-hour break there was a similar motion moved by my colleague Ms Cunningham of the third party. The reason I believe both of us have wanted to bring this to the attention of the government is that we think it's very important, for OTAB to have the public credibility, that all directors' meetings be open to the public. I believe the act states that there should be two meetings open to the public. I don't think

this is an area of public policy where issues have to be discussed and decided upon behind closed doors. I believe discussions in regard to training and adjustment for working women and men in Ontario should be out in the open. I think that's very important.

The next part of my amendment speaks to a quorum. I'm quite concerned that the government has not addressed any sort of dispute resolution process in the bill. The government is fully aware that in the fall the health and safety agency had some severe problems in finding itself in deadlock. In the end, the government actually had to intervene. In some people's view, it actually fell apart. We don't want OTAB to fall apart, and I would really ask the government, if it doesn't accept my dispute resolution mechanism or the Tories'—and I believe there's another one coming from my colleague Mr Offer—to at least find a dispute resolution mechanism and put it in the bill so there's going to be some guidance there.

What I've tried to do is keep the intent of the bill and make sure that it's still the clients and the customers driving the system, as the government wants and I certainly agree with. Therefore, there's got to be a majority of directors from the business side, a majority of the directors from the labour side and not a majority necessary from the education equity group in total, so that it is driven by workers and business.

I'm going to finish these remarks now because I had to excuse myself for another meeting over the lunch-hour and I missed the parliamentary assistant's response to Ms Cunningham's amendments. I'd like to close right now on this and just hear what Mr Wilson's response is to why the government doesn't have a dispute resolution mechanism in the bill.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thanks, Mr Ramsay. It's true that this is very similar to a motion put forward by the Progressive Conservative critic. The answer, then, is largely the same. The preferred method of arriving at decision-making in the OTAB board of governors will be through consensus. Therefore, to set out anything in the legislation would become the point of reference and would lead to that being the method of least risk, that possibility. Consensus is the model we're looking for.

Secondly, there's a mediation process being considered as well, so that in cases where consensus can't be reached immediately there will be a possibility, short of actually having to have a vote, that would settle the matter, again with the idea that, as far as possible, consensus would be the way of arriving at the decision-making. Again, that's after consultation with the labour market partners and agreeing with them or at least finding the agreement that this is the way to proceed, that because of the agreement that we're trying to improve the training system in Ontario, this can be done in a way that people can recognize other people's interests and move towards a resolution on a consensus basis.

As far as the matter of the open meetings is concerned, the legislation just speaks to the fact that two have to be

public, to show that there is a public aspect to this, leaving the matter of just how many up to the board of directors when it sets out its bylaws and through the regulations. There are other ways, though, of coming at the deliberations of the agency. As with any other public agency, there is the matter of releasing reports or minutes, where that is deemed appropriate, as well as the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, which provides access to the deliberations.

Again, those matters are covered, we think, in a way that is appropriate to what we're trying to do here, by setting out in the legislation what should be there as a guide and then leaving for, in the one case, the regulation, and, in the other, bylaws actually how it works out in practice.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Wilson, I accept your argument that it certainly is preferable that all decisions made by OTAB should be reached by consensus. I think that would be the ideal. God knows we would all hope that this is what will happen. The question I have for you, though, because we've had past experience with other agencies, is, what if that doesn't happen? Shouldn't we put in the act, then, that decision-making preferably should be derived by consensus but have some sort of qualifier in there, "But if it isn't, we give direction to that board as to how to resolve disputes?"

I'm open to any argument, actually, I'm not partial to mine; I just tried to design one that was in the spirit of the bill that you've intended so that it is driven by labour and business. So I would be open to any mechanism. I'm just concerned that we've left it wide open and we could have a problem here.

Mr Gary Wilson: We believe that this way of doing it, again, leaves it more open than actually specifying it in the legislation would do. In fact, we think it would be the opposite; of course, by putting it in the legislation, then that would become the way of proceeding. The mechanism that I think would provide the greatest flexibility is through the directors themselves to agree upon it through the bylaws, which, of course, the government has a role in approving.

Mr Ramsay: Okay. Thank you very much.

1420

The Vice-Chair: Ms Witmer.

Mrs Witmer: I would certainly support the motion that's been put forward by Mr Ramsay, and I think we've talked about the need for directors' meetings to be public. As far as the quorum is concerned, I would agree that we need five directors representing business, five from labour and three from the other groups named.

I'd like to focus on the decision-making, because obviously that's going to be the most critical as far as the operation of OTAB is concerned, and it's going to be that decision-making process that impacts on the success or failure of OTAB. Certainly this morning I spent considerable time outlining some of the difficulties that had been experienced by the workplace health and safety organization.

It's interesting, I have a letter here that was written by Mr Allen on November 20, and it was written to the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. The Ontario Chamber of Commerce was concerned about the fact that decisions of OTAB's governing body might run into some difficulty

and it asked that they be based on a double majority, which is more or less what is being requested here plus three.

This is Mr Allen's response, and he says: "The most important goal with respect to decisions taken by OTAB is that they should strive, whenever possible, to base decisions on a consensus among all groups represented on the board. Where consensus cannot be reached, I understand your concerns that a simple majority may not always be suitable. The concept of a double majority approach as a proposed alternative needs considerable discussion and refinement."

He mentions that there are a couple of issues that need to be examined. For example: "Under what circumstances should the board utilize this approach? How do we ensure that an appropriate role is maintained for the other labour market partners represented on the board (other than business and labour)? What would be done to avoid or resolve potential stalemates?"

"Questions such as these," says Mr Allen, "must be answered before we can enshrine any approach to decision-making. I would encourage business and the other labour market partners to enter into discussions to develop an approach to strike the right balance on these and other issues." He goes on to say, and this is the key: "It is not feasible at this time to add a section specifying decision-making procedures to the bill to be tabled for first reading. However, if an acceptable approach can be agreed upon soon enough, I would have no objections to considering adding it as an amendment at some point prior to third reading."

So the indication here from Mr Allen is that he certainly was most agreeable that the decision-making procedures could form part of the bill, and I guess I would ask you why has that not occurred. Why is the government still so intent on putting this into the regulations, since, certainly in this instance, Mr Allen seems to be quite willing to consider including it as an amendment prior to third reading?

Mr Gary Wilson: As I said in response to similar questions, Mrs Witmer, the idea is that the procedures for decision-making are essentially an operational matter and they can be addressed in the bylaws, partly because of the flexibility of them; that is, that as OTAB develops, that could be reflected in changing the bylaws more easily than legislation.

So again, as we see it, the role of the legislation is to lay out a general approach to the issue, leaving the specifics to the bylaws to be arrived at by the directors in consultation with the government.

Mrs Witmer: But you know, in this letter Mr Allen seems to believe that the process for decision-making could be resolved in the legislation, the bill that we're dealing with here. I guess I'm asking you, what has happened in the interim that now leads that not to be included at this point in time? I mean, why? Is it because of the change in ministers or what decision has been handed down? Was there no agreement reached or what's happened?

Mr Gary Wilson: No, the agreement we reached or the decision taken is that it's better to leave the exact mechanics to the bylaws rather than putting it into the legislation because that is too restrictive. Again, going over the approach to it, consensus being the first, some type of

mediation to try to reach consensus, but as the last resort then having a voting mechanism that can be laid out in the bylaws.

Mrs Witmer: I guess I would ask you, do you believe that in the decision-making we're going to be looking at, in the regulations, a triple majority? Will that be the mechanism that we'll use?

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, I think the suggestion laid out by Richard Allen in some of the correspondence we've heard is a suggestion that would be available to be used, but again it has to be done in consultation with the directors and again left to the bylaws.

Mrs Witmer: So at this time you can't really assure the public in Ontario that there will be a double majority or a triple majority or simply a simple majority?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think what can be assured is that the mechanism that we arrive at that will be laid out in the bylaws will be the one that the labour market partners agree on as being the best way of reaching decision-making.

Mrs Witmer: They haven't agreed on that yet then, you're saying?

Mr Gary Wilson: We've agreed that this is the way to proceed, to leave it to the bylaws, which can only be drawn up after the board is appointed.

Mrs Witmer: Thank you.

The Vice-Chair: Thank you. Further discussion? All those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please indicate.

Mr Offer: Recorded vote.

Ayes

Brown, Offer, Ramsay, Witmer.

The Vice-Chair: Those opposed?

Nays

Malkowski, Marchese, Martin, Sutherland, Wilson, (Kingston and The Islands).

Ayes 4; nays 5.

The Vice-Chair: Shall section 12 of the bill carry? Those in favour.

Mr Offer: Recorded vote.

The Vice-Chair: Yes. It's a recorded vote. Agreed? Same vote recorded.

Mr Offer: Except reversed.

Mr Ramsay: That's right. We almost got that passed.

The Vice-Chair: We go to section 13 of the bill. Mr Ramsay, you have a motion.

Mr Ramsay: Yes. I think for expediency I will withdraw my amendment on section 13.

The Vice-Chair: The motion is withdrawn.

Mrs Witmer: And I will do likewise. I will withdraw my motion.

The Vice-Chair: Mr Offer, you have a motion.

Mr Offer: Yes. I move that section 13 of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Bylaws

"(1) The directors shall pass bylaws governing OTAB's procedure and governing the operations of the directors.

"Decision-making

"(2) A decision of the directors requires the approval of twelve directors, including,

"(a) five directors representing business;

"(b) five directors representing labour; and,

"(c) directors representing two other groups."

The Vice-Chair: Thank you, Mr Offer. Do you wish to speak to the motion?

Mr Offer: I do. We have brought forward this motion and it was hoped that if Mr Ramsay's motions dealing with the number of directors on the board had been accepted, as well as his decision-making process, then this motion would not have been necessary. Unfortunately, the government members have voted down Mr Ramsay's amendments which dealt with adding three more directors to the board in the educator and training field and, as well, voted down his amendment dealing with the decision-making process which embraced the principles of democracy and majority rule. However, the government members have sought to vote against that and this motion is made as an attempt by our caucus to instil the wishes of the Minister of Skills Development.

1430

I think that we must be aware that the minister wrote a letter to the labour market partners February 2, 1993, and in that letter the minister wanted to assure people and in fact to "reach a level of clarity from which we can proceed." I will quote:

"In approaching this issue, we first wanted to establish principles. Before dealing with specific approaches it is important that we are clear on what we want this decision-making process to achieve. These principles are as follows:

"— That the governing body should seek to achieve consensus on decisions wherever possible.

"— That the leadership role of business and labour within OTAB should be acknowledged.

"— That any voting mechanism must maintain a meaningful role for the other (non-business/labour) members of the board.

"— That the voting mechanism should contribute to the development of subsequent consensus in a positive fashion."

The minister's letter—and this is, Chair, under signature of the minister—goes on to say:

"The approach which we feel best addresses all these principles is the following model:

"On any issue, the board will first endeavour to reach a consensus. A variety of approaches are available to assist in the consensus-building process. Whatever approach is taken, it must be clear that a genuine effort has been made to develop consensus and that sufficient time has been taken to give consensus a chance.

"There are other intermediate decision-making steps the board may wish to include in the process before taking an issue to a final vote."

These again are the words of the minister, and the minister goes on to say:

"Only where consensus cannot be achieved, and where any other intermediate steps have failed to yield an acceptable

resolution, would an issue come to a final vote. For any motion to be confirmed in that vote, it would require the support of a majority of the full board (at least 12 of 22), including a majority of the business representatives (5 of 8), a majority of the labour representatives (5 of 8), plus a vote from each of at least two of the remaining five labour market partner groups. These are the requirements for an affirmation. Failure to meet any of these requirements would result in the defeat of the motion."

Those were the words of the minister of the crown, the person who was charged with the responsibility of seeing this bill move to legislation.

My amendment puts in legislative form the words of the minister around the issue of voting. The members of this committee, through our public hearing process, will be aware there is some concern, some discomfort over how this voting procedure may proceed. This amendment, if accepted, will deal with those concerns and deal with that issue. We cannot understand how the members of the government would be reluctant to insert in the legislation the words of their own minister. We recognize that this will provide a level of assurance to the people who are part of the board. We would rather have had Mr Ramsay's amendments accepted, but the government chose not to do so, and so we are left with this amendment which will provide a level of assurance to the members of the board that this matter, and matters that come before them after all chances for consensus and mediation have been exhausted, will regulate the procedure for voting.

The equity groups will see its place in the voting procedure, business will see its place in the voting procedure and labour will see its place. Members of the government should be well aware that anything else is totally unacceptable. You have presided over a health and safety agency which, because of that not being in place, is in a shambles. If you do not believe it, speak to the people who are no longer part of the health and safety agency in this province. This amendment will secure the voting procedure, after consensus attempts have been made, so that the board can deal with the matters and arrive at a solution.

You must be aware what the legacy of the health and safety agency has wrought on that group. There have been such hard feelings that the chance for consensus in the future is very difficult, if not impossible. In fact, this was one of the concerns that the minister had. The minister indicated that if this is followed, then chances for consensus on issues that follow the one before them will have a greater opportunity of success, and so I would expect that this amendment will be accepted. There would be a tremendous amount of suspicion if members of the government would not put in legislative form the written statement of their minister. You heard me indicate this morning that there would be tremendous concern and discomfort because people who want to be part of the agency and want to work towards consensus—and if necessary, mediation and if necessary, a vote—will be very suspicious that indeed these principles as espoused by the minister will be changed.

I believe we have a duty to all of those people, that government members who took part in this process trump it up all the time. I believe we, as a committee, have a

responsibility to all of the people who came before this committee, to all of the people who took part in the much-heralded consultation process by the government. We have a responsibility to meet the concerns they have brought forward. If you do not, then this is a sham. You are not listening to the people; you are shutting the door in their face and you are not prepared to put in legislative form the words of your own minister. Remember this: Talk is cheap. Put it in the legislation. Let people have an assurance that what the minister said will be carried forward. Certainly, I would like to hear the response by the parliamentary assistant, as I am hopeful that he will send a message to his colleagues to accept this motion for amendment.

1440

Mr Gary Wilson: I think, Mr Offer, I hope you're going to hear a similar response to the same question that has been raised now in a couple of similar ways, that in undertaking to share responsibility for providing the training programs in Ontario, we are working with the labour market partners, and it seems to me that the measure of that is how the way OTAB operates is arrived at.

What is clearly assured here—and again I agree with you that the assurance is important, because when people came before this committee they were telling us they wanted to see the training programs or the way training is done in Ontario improved. That's what we're aiming to do through this sharing of responsibility, and part of that is in the operation of OTAB. It's clearly set out here that the bylaws will be established by the directors, and that will address how decision-making will be carried out.

The minister's letter lays out three steps to a decision-making, the most important being the consensus. Again, if the labour market partners are going to have a full role in this, then they are the ones expected to reach that consensus. The second step is the mediation procedure, that where consensus can't be reached there will be at least an attempt made to reach it. In the final analysis, when those two procedures don't work or no consensus can be reached, then a mechanism is set out that through the regulations everyone can be heard. The labour market partners will be heard in a vote.

But again, the basis of this is the participation of the directors, and that has to await the passage of the legislation.

Mr Offer: With the greatest respect, I think you're wrong. The regulations state that the Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations governing the decision-making process followed at directors' meetings. That's the cabinet. They will make those decisions. The directors do have, through their bylaws, the power to make up some other things, but that one has been taken off the table. Cabinet will make that decision. There won't be a vote on that. I would like to get a clarification on that.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm told that the clarification comes in subsection 30(2) about consultation, "Before a regulation is made under subsection (1), the minister shall consult with OTAB about it."

Mr Offer: You've made my point. Sure, "the minister shall consult with OTAB," and the simple response is, "So what?" Let's just put it to the test. The minister has decided

that the decision-making process have been a particular form. The minister takes it to cabinet, that's the way it's approved, the minister says to the OTAB group, "This is the way it is," and the OTAB group says, "We don't like that." So what? You know what you've done? You've created the Workplace Health and Safety Agency. You've created that which was destroyed just a scant five, six months ago.

It's clear: The directors of OTAB do not decide the decision-making process. That's been taken off the table for decision. That goes to cabinet. I don't care how many times you read this legislation backwards or forwards; I'm reading the bill that you gave to me and the fact of the matter is that the minister of the crown who's in charge and responsible for this piece of legislation said that we're going to try to get consensus, we'll try to get mediation, and if we can't do that we'll have a vote and this is the way the vote should process. Hopefully, by having a voting regime like this, it will lead to consensus on other issues, on following issues.

You know what? I agree. I think that's right. Many people came before the committee and said, "This is needed—a double majority." Obviously the minister wrote to these people and said: "You know what? You're right, and this is the thing that's needed. We need clarity, we want consensus, we want mediation. Hopefully that will deal with the issue but if it isn't, we're not going to suffer the same fate as what happened to the Workplace Health and Safety Agency. We'll have a vote, and this is how the vote's going to progress." That's what your own minister said. The board cannot make the decision as to the decision-making process. They can't. Your legislation says they can't. Your legislation took that issue off the table. How do you respond to your own legislation?

Mr Gary Wilson: Mr Offer, the legislation talks about consultation. These are labour market partners. The government is sharing the responsibility for training in Ontario, and if they're going to be treated as partners then they are going to have to have some part in designing the bylaws.

Mr Offer: What happens if the partners don't agree?

Mr Gary Wilson: It's a possibility.

Mr Offer: What's the process? They want the assurance. What's the process?

Mr Gary Wilson: Well, it's going to be set out in the bylaws.

Mr Offer: The minister has set out the process.

Mr Gary Wilson: The minister hasn't set out the process as far as the mediation goes, for instance.

Mr Offer: The minister has set out the process that in the event consensus and mediation don't work, this is the way it's going to be. If you don't accept this amendment, the people will rightfully say, "Bunch of baloney, this letter."

The minister, as we all know, is a man of integrity. Everybody believes in what the minister said. The minister would not have signed his name to this letter. I recognize that the minister is no longer the minister of this ministry, but I think there is a moral obligation to maintain the position of the minister who takes pride in this. I believe

strongly that if that minister were the minister today, this bill would contain this amendment.

Mr Ramsay: We support the minister.

Mr Offer: We do support the minister, and there are people out there who say, "Yes, if you're going to have to deal with it, let's deal with it by consensus, by mediation and then let's have a vote."

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, please.

Mr Sutherland: I think a couple of points just need to be added here. In the letter, the minister does not state that he's going to put those principles directly in the legislation. He states that he's made a commitment to those principles, that he's aware of the concern and that there's a commitment to deal with the concern. I think that is an important thing to remember.

There is a process and Mr Wilson has reiterated what that process will be. A commitment has been made and people are aware of the concerns. The commitment was made by the minister to be aware of those concerns and deal with them. But I don't believe he said that he'd specifically put it in the OTAB legislation. He's made a commitment to those principles and he's made a commitment that consultation will go on with the board, and so by making that commitment he's saying: "Yes, this is the basis on how we're going to attempt to resolve them. It may be on a consensus basis, which the board is supposed to operate on." It may be on a consensus basis. The board may want to modify that. Of course, if you put it specifically in the legislation, the board won't be able to recommend any type of modification that it feels will work better.

Mr Offer: Sometimes I would have thought, Mr Sutherland, you might not have—what you just said is in Hansard. I can only say I am somewhat relieved that the Chair cannot read my mind at this time, because he would rule me unparliamentary and out of order. I cannot imagine that members of the government would not put in legislation the position of their own minister. It's absolutely shameful.

The Chair: But in fact, Mr Offer, I can read minds. It's a weighty responsibility. It's a gift that one must use with great care.

Mr Ramsay: Could you share it with the rest of us, Mr Chair? I just see a double X there.

1450

Mr Offer: A recorded vote, please.

The Chair: There being no further debate, all those in favour of Mr Offer's motion, please raise your hands. Keep your hands raised until your name is called.

Ayes

Brown, Cunningham, Offer, Ramsay, Witmer.

The Chair: All opposed, please raise your hands. Keep your hands raised until your name is called.

Nays

Haeck, Huget, Malkowski, Martin, Sutherland, Wilson (Kingston and The Islands).

The Chair: Mr Offer's motion is defeated.

Mr Brown: Shocking.

Mr Martin: Don't be shocked; there's more to come.

Mr Brown: That doesn't surprise me.

The Chair: Addressing section 13 of the bill, is there any debate about or around section 13 of the bill? Shall section 13 carry? Those in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 13 carries.

Addressing section 14 of the bill, shall section 14 of the bill carry? All those in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 14 of the bill carries.

We will now go to section 15 of the bill. Please, Mr Wilson or Mr Huget.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'll read it. I move that the French version of subsection 15(2) of the bill be amended by striking out "peuvent adopter" in the second line and substituting "adoptent."

The Chair: Do you want to speak to that?

Mr Gary Wilson: As we heard in the public presentations to the committee, this was not seen to be an exact translation of the English version. So we've made the changes to make the meaning of both versions similar.

The Chair: All those in favour of Mr Wilson's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Mr Wilson's motion is carried.

Addressing now section 15, as amended. Yes, sir.

Mr Sutherland: I'm sorry, I thought you were asking for the vote.

The Chair: No. I was asking for debate. There being no debate around section 15, shall section 15, as amended, carry? All in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 15, as amended, carries.

Addressing section 16 of the bill, is there any debate or discussion around section 16 of the bill? Shall section 16 of the bill carry?

Mr Brown: One moment, Mr Chair, while I study section 16. It's rather a long section. I was wondering if the parliamentary assistant could indicate who establishes the salary of the chief executive officer. I haven't been able to read it quickly enough to know.

The Chair: Unanimous consent to set aside the vote on section 16? Thank you.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'll defer to Peter Landry to answer that.

Mr Landry: The chief executive officer is a civil service position, so the salary will be established consistent with similar senior positions in the Ontario public service.

Mr Brown: As I see, there's a deputy minister's salary grid. Is that what we're discussing?

Mr Landry: This position is not a deputy minister position; it will be a senior position. There is reference to having the authority of a deputy minister under the Public Service Act. That's not the same as being a deputy minister, so it would not be a deputy minister; it's probably more in the range of an assistant deputy minister.

Mr Brown: For a salary range, we're looking in the area of an assistant deputy minister, is that what I'm understanding?

Mr Landry: Yes, what is known as an SMG3 level range, because this is not an assistant deputy; it's part of an agency. But we are being consistent with government level salaries. I can't be more precise than that at this time.

Mr Brown: It is essentially just following the civil service salary grid.

Mr Landry: Yes. In fact, all the salaries of the agency will be following the civil service salary grid, because they're all civil servants.

The Chair: Shall section 16 of the bill carry? All in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 16 of the bill carries.

Section 17 of the bill: Will there be any discussion around section 17 of the bill? Shall section 17 of the bill carry? All in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 17 of the bill carries.

We are now addressing section 18 of the bill.

Mr Gary Wilson: I move that subsection 18(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Local training and adjustment boards

"(1) OTAB shall designate local training and adjustment boards that comply with the regulations made under this act."

The Chair: Do you want to speak to that?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes. During the public hearings, we were impressed by the enthusiasm and the commitment of many of the presenters in their support of local boards. We felt that the way it originally read, "OTAB may designate," even though it is suitable in a legalistic sense—because of the nature of the local boards, where they will be set up in conjunction with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board and the federal government—that it's something that can't be necessarily mandated. We felt, again because of the concern about local boards, that in this case we would change the "may" to "shall" to show our determination that the local boards will be set up in conjunction with the regulations or with regard to the regulations. We think this is a suitable amendment, and we are pleased to move it.

Mr Ramsay: I have to tell you that in opposition it could be tempting to ridicule you for changing your mind, but that would be speaking out of both sides of my mouth. There are maybe others in the committee who might want to ridicule you and are looking right now at your words from Hansard of the previous weeks. I won't do it because I agree with this motion; it echoes what I will be doing later on in a more complete amendment for all of section 18. I agree with this.

I will congratulate you for listening to the people there and to the pressure that I and all my colleagues brought forward with this in agreeing with those people and talking to the government to do this. This is the right thing to do, and I will be voting in favour.

Mr Offer: I too am in support.

Mr Sutherland: Be careful.

Mr Offer: Pardon me? I just am intrigued by some of the comments that were made primarily by Mr Sutherland and Mr Wilson during the public hearings, because this

was brought forward by the opposition members countless times. People would come in and say, "The success of OTAB will be dependent upon how strong the local boards are." We said, "We think that's important." I remember the words I used, "the mandatory establishment of local boards in the legislation." I just took a quick look at one Hansard. Mr Kimble Sutherland stated on 26 January—

1500

Mr Brown: The member from Oxford.

Mr Offer: "We've stated many times, every time the opposition asked a question about local boards, that the legislation cannot have the local boards in it, because that has to be negotiated...It has to be established first before it does that."

I could indeed bring forward some quotes by Mr Wilson saying exactly the same thing on the same issue. As Mr Sutherland and Mr Wilson continually stated to those people who came before us that the local boards could not be established in the legislation, as they ridiculed the opposition for asking for the mandatory establishment of local boards in the legislation, I'm just wondering, for interest's sake, what happened?

Mr Gary Wilson: Perhaps just for clarification I should emphasize the last part of the section. I'll read the whole subsection, the whole paragraph. "OTAB shall designate local training and adjustment boards that comply with the regulations made under this act." It's not saying that they're being set out in the legislation; they're going to be established according to the regulations, and that's the significant part here. It's just that now we say that they will be designated.

The Chair: Mr Sutherland, do you want to add to that?

Mr Sutherland: Yes. I just want to add that I think Mr Wilson is on the right track with his comments in the sense that many in their presentations said they wanted to see the boards established within the legislation and see how the boards were going to operate within the legislation.

This amendment says that the opposition tried to portray that there'd be some great conspiracy not to establish any local boards whatsoever, or that was the impression they tried to leave. We want to be clear to people that the intent all along was to establish local boards; there was no conspiracy not to. The legislation to address that concern, we're still not setting out in the legislation how those local boards are going to be set up. That's going to be set up by regulation, as was indicated, once the negotiation process goes on.

So let's be quite clear: That is why the change is made, and how the local board operate is not in the legislation. But to clarify for anyone who may have had any doubts or may have been just greatly cynical that there is a great plot not to establish local boards, the wording has been changed from "may" to "shall."

Mr Offer: I've listened to the words of the parliamentary assistant and to Mr Sutherland on this issue, and your position on this matter is as if your favourite colour is plaid.

Mr Ramsay: Excuse us for a second while Mr Offer laughs at his own joke. He'll be recovering, I think, momentarily. He's the only one who got it. He has a very unique sense of humour; he's Scots.

Mr Offer: You can be certain that the comment which I've just made will find its way back into other debates later on. But the fact of the matter is that I'm a little concerned about the comment made by Mr Wilson. Are you going to be establishing local boards under the bill now or are you just saying we're going to do it, but by regulation? There is still a great deal of discussion over that taking place. I had some concern in terms of your response. I was very concerned over what Mr Sutherland said as he tried to justify a position that was diametrically opposed to his own position last week. I'd like to get a clarification on what "that comply with the regulations made under this act" means.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, are you going to respond to that?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, I will. As we said in the public hearings, the setting up of the local boards—and this is based, of course, on the consultation carried out last year—will be done in conjunction with the federal government and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. So in that sense, the regulations will set out how these boards will be set up, according to the boundaries and the composition etc.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Malkowski, please.

Mr Malkowski: I'm trying to follow the discussion about the concerns raised from the member for Mississauga North, but it seems the quote you identified—Kimble Sutherland—I don't know. You were laughing—this is a serious discussion. Was it a serious concern? Could you clarify for me, please?

Mr Offer: As the question was posed to me, let me be very clear, Mr Malkowski, as I've sat on this committee from its inception, that you should be aware that many people came into this committee and said, "This will fail if you do not have mandatory establishment of local boards, reflecting community needs." Mr Sutherland continued to say, "We can't put it in the legislation." It is in Hansard time and again. Mr Wilson said the same thing. Now we see this namby-pamby amendment, which does seem to move towards the inclusion of local boards mandatorily established in the legislation.

The fact of the matter is, Mr Malkowski, as we went through our hearings, every time any member of the opposition, be it the official opposition or third party, brought forward this concern, we were ridiculed by your government saying that was impossible, "If only you understood." The fact of the matter is, as it turns out, we did understand and this amendment bears fact to that. Far from being a funny matter, it is a serious matter at the heart of which lies the success or failure of this process, and the question we legitimately ask is: How come the government has changed position from that which they held just last week? What transpired between today and a week ago that we should be aware of? If they do not wish to comment, that's

fine, but believe me, it was not a matter of any joking nature.

Mr Ramsay: Let's vote on it.

The Chair: There being no further debate on Mr Wilson's motion—yes, ma'am. There being only one other person—I misunderstood briefly—to debate Mr Wilson's motion, we will now hear from Mrs Cunningham, who is that other person.

Mrs Cunningham: This giant leap forward on behalf of the parliamentary assistant caused a great deal of excitement in the air. It's a good feeling to give and take, isn't it? You feel pretty good about getting your motions passed. We've had four amendments by the government now, all kinds of excitement. They'll be able to go out and say they amended the act now, I think. They listened and they amended the act, at least in three or four regards. That's great. I wish they would go out and say they had amended it on the advice of all of the members of the committee as opposed to their own good advice.

We certainly agree with this amendment and I can only say that I hope they will very seriously consider what we feel is the giant flaw in this whole section with regard to local training and adjustment boards, councils and reference committees: that, although they've agreed these should be mandatory by changing the word "may" to "shall," we also agree that there ought to be some direction in the act as to how they're set up and how they're constituted. I hope the parliamentary assistant and the members of the government opposite will give us some of their attention with regard to our amendments to section 18. It'd be nice to see them voting in favour of some of the items we're putting forth where we feel there's some change necessary.

But I must say, it's going to have to take some concentration. I understand the members of the government can concentrate on the changing of a word from "may" to "shall," but the next two amendments, as put forward by the government and by ourselves, will require a lot of concentration if they are serious about giving some thoughtful discussion. I would like to hear from the members opposite with regard to why they think some of the suggestions we made are good or could be improved upon, because any debate that goes on with regard to this now would have, I think, some input for the government with regard to some of the suggestions that may be made to it, with regard to regulations anyway. I think it's important that we all give the next amendments some serious consideration, no matter what happens. Notice my decreasing optimism and my creeping pessimism.

1510

The Chair: Your optimism is becoming feckless, that's apparent. All those in favour of Mr Wilson's motion please indicate. Opposed? Mr Wilson's motion carries.

Mr Gary Wilson: I move that section 18 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Role of OTAB

“(3.1) OTAB shall provide a broad policy and accountability framework for designated local training and adjustment boards.”

Mr Ramsay: I don't have that.

Mrs Cunningham: I don't have that.

Clerk of the Committee (Ms Tannis Manikel): I don't have any more copies here.

Interjection: It was handed out yesterday?

The Vice-Chair: Did you wish to speak to the motion, Mr Wilson?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes. This is in response to one of the motions we think is a good suggestion.

Mrs Cunningham: I don't have it in English.

Mr Sutherland: Do you want my copy?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, I do. I need somebody's.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I was saying, we think there's a reasonable—

Interjection: I didn't get a copy.

The Vice-Chair: Go ahead, Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: —idea that there be the policy set out for the local boards and that since it is public money, the accountability system be specified as well. So that, as I say, seems like a reasonable suggestion and we're happy to put it forward.

The Vice-Chair: Further discussion?

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, does it matter? I haven't had a lot of time to think about this, because I just saw it, but it does seem reasonable. Certainly, in the spirit of what we heard before the committee, we will be expanding on it and I expect, as I said before, that we would receive the same kind of positive response we've given you without having to go and ask any questions of the powers that be.

Mr Gary Wilson: I want to point out, Mrs Cunningham, that this is part of—

Mrs Cunningham: That's correct and I'm just wondering why you're putting it forward now, since ours is inclusive and we didn't deal with it piece by piece. I don't know how you want to deal with it, but if you're going to defeat ours, I think it would be a good idea to maybe deal with the whole thing and talk to why you think parts of it are good—at least get yourselves on the record—and then deal with yours.

Mr Gary Wilson: In fact, that's what we've done.

Mr Sutherland: No, I think the question is, should we be dealing with the PC amendment first or Mr Ramsay's amendment first, and then come back and deal with the government one, given the nature of—

Mrs Cunningham: It makes us think you're not going to take ours. Obviously, I can see how things are going and I would have been a lot more excited about this on day one, because I had hoped then—but I still think it's a matter of courtesy to take a look at the big picture and then pick a piece of it that you like and put it forward on your own behalf.

Mr Sutherland: What is your guidance, Mr Chair?

Mr Gary Wilson: I am going to speak for my colleague that we agree with that, Ms Cunningham, and certainly will stand ours down or withdraw it and—

Mr Sutherland: No, not withdraw it. We don't want to withdraw it, but stand it down. I was just wondering, because part of the amendment Mr Wilson proposed is incorporated in a much larger amendment that Ms Cunningham has put forward. I'm not sure if it's in Mr Ramsay's or not.

The Vice-Chair: Is there unanimous consent to stand down the government motion?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes.

The Vice-Chair: We'll then proceed to Mr Ramsay's motion.

Mr Ramsay: I appreciate the suggestion from my colleague Ms Cunningham that we maybe deal with the section as a whole. We can consider what the outcome is of that vote, then we can consider 18(3.1) in isolation.

I have decided to basically deal with section 18 comprehensively because it is a unit and I think it really comes down to the crux of this bill. If we are to ensure that OTAB is successful it is extremely important that instead of the sort of top-down organization the government has designed—

The Vice-Chair: Mr Ramsay, would you read your motion, please?

Mr Ramsay: I'm sorry. I move that section 18 of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Local training and adjustment boards

"18(1) OTAB shall designate local training and adjustment boards that have been established in accordance with the regulations made under this act.

"Area to be served

"(2) OTAB shall, in the designation of a local training and adjustment board, specify the area that it is to serve.

"Consultation

"(3) Before designating a local training and adjustment board, OTAB shall consult with the upper- and lower-tier municipalities in the area to be served and with any existing boards that provide labour force development programs and services there.

"Notice

"(4) Notice of the designation shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area to be served.

"Appeal

"(5) An upper- or lower-tier municipality that disagrees with the designation of a local training and adjustment board or with the boundaries of the area to be served may appeal the matter to the executive council within sixty days of the publication of the notice.

"Powers and duties

"(6) Designated local training and adjustment boards shall promote, support, fund, coordinate and evaluate labour force development programs and services in the area to be served, on behalf of OTAB, and have the other powers and duties that are delegated to them by OTAB and that are assigned by the regulations.

"Same

"(7) Designated local training and adjustment boards are responsible to the directors in connection with the matters referred to in subsection (6).

"Funding

"(8) OTAB shall provide funding to designated local training and adjustment boards, in accordance with the regulations."

The Vice-Chair: Thank you, Mr Ramsay. Do you now wish to speak to your motion?

Mr Ramsay: Returning, then, to subsection 18(1), this motion now has been adopted by the government. Again, I thank the government for making it mandatory for OTAB to designate local training and adjustment boards.

It is very important that for OTAB to be successful the designation of the local board be agreed upon by the people who will be the partners in that board.

Group after group came forward to our committee over the last three weeks to state that they did not want to be lumped together with other groups they didn't have a sense of community with; that they didn't want to have a local board area designated to them by Queen's Park or by the OTAB. They wanted to be able to decide on their own behalf which should be their area and they have done this for a couple of reasons. First of all, we're not really starting from scratch here. The federal government made an attempt—in some areas it has been successful and in some areas it hasn't been so successful—with their community industrial training committees. In some groups, these CITCs have worked very well and they've been able to get good cooperation from labour, for instance, and private trainers and all the different partners and in other areas various groups have decided not to be partners. But in those areas where those people, on a volunteer basis, I might add, have been working very hard on behalf of training working women and men in Ontario, we should not throw the baby out with the bathwater. We should be able to work with those people and start with them as a nucleus for the new LTABs that will take their place.

1520

It's very important that we consult with the localities, now that we'd be in a position with the passage of this bill to start to set up the LTABs. I think the area to be served, number one, is very important, and who would be better to consult than the municipalities in the area, and of course those agencies I just have spoken about, and not only those particular agencies, but there are other training groups that came before us. Of the 179 people who came before us, many were regional training entities that had formed on their own and to this day are supplying very good training advice and sometimes even providing programs to their areas.

I think it's very important that there be a very thorough consultation before these are set up so that we will make sure that there's a community of interest that's been developed with these regions so it will work, because if we sort of have Queen's Park coming out and saying, "Hamilton, you're going to be working with Brantford and Haldimand-Norfolk," for example, a group that came before us felt that there wasn't any sort of commonality there. Then we're going to have difficulty. In some groups, some urban areas are going to dominate some rural areas, for instance. Some strong municipalities will dominate other weaker municipalities of a smaller size. So for this to get off the

ground, it's very important that we make sure everybody's in agreement as to what the makeup is going to be. I think that's extremely important.

Again, in this legislation, as much in this legislation is, it is permissive rather than mandatory. So under notice this is why I have brought forward this amendment, the word "shall," in that, "Notice of the designation shall be published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area to be served," should be there rather than "may" so that the general public understands what is happening.

I also think it's very important, if OTAB goes ahead with its other partners to designate the LTABs and there is disagreement at the local level, that there be an appeal mechanism. The legislation doesn't speak to any of this, and I think it's very important that not only is there consultation but, if there's disagreement in the end, at least there is some recourse for the municipalities. I've suggested in this amendment that the recourse be to the executive council of Ontario. I think it's important that within 60 days of the publication of this notice of the designation of the LTAB, those municipalities could go to the cabinet of the government of Ontario to appeal this decision.

I also think it's very important that the powers and duties be spelled out, because, again, the legislation is relatively silent on that, in that under powers and duties—and actually it does this in section 19—it only says, "The councils have the powers and duties that are delegated to them by OTAB and that are assigned by the regulations."

Many people have come before us and said that this is not good enough, that they want to have some certainty that not only are there going to be local boards—and we now have that certainty, as of today, with the passage of the government's amendment—but they want some certainty as to the makeup that I speak to here, and the area, but they also want some certainty as to what are going to be the powers and responsibilities—and that's why I have pointed those out here—and to make sure that these are mandatory in the legislation.

I think it's important that the designated local boards and the training and adjustment boards shall be in the same position locally that OTAB is provincially, and that is that they shall promote, support, fund, coordinate and evaluate labour force development programs at the local level. I think it's important to make that clear, that OTAB will be delegating its provincial responsibility locally, and not that the provincial body, the OTAB, is going to be really doing this at the local level and somehow the LTAB is just going to be some sort of rubber-stamp mechanism.

I hope the government's intention is that it be a grass-roots operation and these LTABs really have some power, but if we rely just upon the establishment of regulation for that, we can't be certain. Therefore, that's why I want to move that in the bill so we can all be certain and all the partners can be certain, the general public can be certain, that, yes, OTAB, once it becomes established, will be delegating those authorities to those local training and adjustment boards so the people at the local level will have a say. In a sense, what I want to do here is enshrine the local empowerment that I hope's the intention of the govern-

ment, but until we see it in the legislation, we won't be sure. To me, that is a real problem.

Lastly, what I'm asking here with the change that I have under funding is that funding, again, shall be provided. I want to ensure that funding will be transferred from OTAB to the local training and adjustment boards. Again, I'd like some certainty. The government has agreed that there will be certainty as to the establishment of those boards. Certainly we could ask, if you want those boards to be effective, that the government then shall provide the funding, rather than may provide the funding. Then we will know that the local boards will have the resources to carry out the work we all want them to do. Thank you very much, Chair.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Wilson.

Mr Gary Wilson: Thank you, Mr Ramsay, for these suggestions that you've elaborated on as far as your amendment to section 18 goes. Again, I have to come back to the idea that the OTAB cannot designate these boards on its own, it has to be done in consultation with the federal government, the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, and the provincial government, and that this will be done through the regulations. The design of the local boards will be done through the regulations, which of course requires OTAB to be in place before that process can be carried out.

On some of your specific suggestions, for instance under appeal, an appeal process exists now that any municipality is free to appeal to the minister responsible for OTAB, if it finds something it disagrees with, and that appeal can be carried out through the government part of the responsibility for OTAB. So that is a very direct process. Again, the powers and duties of OTAB can't take that on by itself; it's got to be done in consultation with the federal part of the program.

Again, we certainly heard in the public hearings and through the consultation that was carried out last year on the local boards that there is a lot of interest, a lot of commitment that these boards work. That is part of the reason we changed the wording to say that those boards will exist and that it has to be set out that they'll exist in the legislation and then the exact design of them has to come through the regulations, again in conjunction with the federal government and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board.

Mr Ramsay: Mr Wilson, what I don't understand is that up until last week you used the same argument against why we could not put it in the bill that OTAB had to designate the local boards because this had to be done, as you say, and I believe you, in consultation with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. But this week you changed your mind and said: "Well, we could put that in the legislation. We could mandate the establishment of the LTAB." I'm saying to you that if now we can do that, why can't we also mandate the powers and the duties? If the powers and the duties are going to reflect the powers and duties of OTAB and there's agreement between the federal and provincial government as to this, then why can't we put that in the act?

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, the proposed design, as we see it, will be done in conjunction with the federal government and its advisory body. In that sense, we can't designate powers and duties that have to be designed through consultation with the federal government.

Mr Ramsay: But don't you see that by omitting this from the bill you cause a lot of uncertainty out there as to how much clout, if you will, the LTABs will have? If you just take a look at your legislation in isolation, with all the background papers that have been developed and the discussions and the consultations, it looks like a very top-down instrument, this OTAB, because there's no certainty there that there will be very strong and effective and funded local agencies with some very broad powers and duties. That's all I'm asking, that what your intention is—not any other intention, but what your intention is—just be spelled out in the act.

1530

Mr Gary Wilson: Certainly we are, again, setting up a partnership here that we think exists not only among the labour market partners but also between the province and the local areas. The minister said that the whole purpose of being very sensitive to community needs is to get away from the cookie cutter approach, that we want to make sure that the local boards reflect the community complexion or characteristics.

I should remind you that the CITCs, which you've praised, to some extent at least, exist now completely free of any legislation or regulation. They are in effect just a program, whereas our view of this is that by setting out very carefully what's in the legislation and then leaving for the regulations, in a very consultative and responsible way, the design of the local boards, we are setting up the best foundation possible so that these will reflect the makeup of the community and then do their jobs as far as being responsive to the special needs of the communities.

Mr Ramsay: Your answer now is starting to give me some concern when you keep saying that this has to be done in cooperation with the federal government, with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. Is there not agreement today that this structure is accepted by both the province and the federal government and this will happen between the province and the federal government? Hasn't that agreement between the two levels of government been reached already, that this is what's going to happen?

Mr Gary Wilson: Certainly we're expecting agreement, but until OTAB is set up, then we just can't move forward with the consultation that has to take place.

Mr Ramsay: Just one last question, Chair. It just seems to me that, wouldn't it be good to have something written in our legislation that shows what Ontario's position is so at least the people on the provincial side, and looking to the province to be a leader in consolidating training and adjustment, will have some certainty that it's here, that the direction of the government is clear because it's actually spelled out as to what it believes the powers and duties should be?

Mr Gary Wilson: I think the direction is very clearly there. The agreement exists between the provincial and the

federal government. It's shown in part by the consultation that took place over the local boards. What we have to work out now are the details. We can't do that until OTAB is in place.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. All those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Mr Ramsay's motion is defeated. Ms Witmer.

Ms Witmer: Which one would you like me to do?

The Chair: Ms Witmer moves that section 18 of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Local training and adjustment boards

"18(1) OTAB shall, after consultation with Employment and Immigration Canada and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, designate local training and adjustment boards that have been established in accordance with the regulations made under this act.

"Composition and operation

"(2) In decisions about the composition and operation of a designated local training and adjustment board, the following shall be taken into account:

"1. The wishes and needs of the local community.

"2. The desirability of incorporating existing entities, such as community industrial training committees, that provide labour force development programs and services.

"3. The desirability of incorporating existing sectoral agreements that deal with labour force development.

"Role of OTAB

"(3) OTAB shall establish a broad policy and accountability framework for designated local training and adjustment boards and shall provide them with information about labour markets, existing services and provincial economic and social policies.

"Role of local boards

"(4) Designated local training and adjustment boards are responsible for meeting the training and adjustment needs of the persons who live in the areas the boards are to serve.

"Same

"(5) Designated local training and adjustment boards have the powers and duties that are delegated to them by OTAB and that are assigned by the regulations.

"Same

"(6) Designated local training and adjustment boards are responsible to the directors in connection with the powers and duties delegated by OTAB or assigned by the regulations.

"Annual report and plan

"(7) Each designated local training and adjustment board shall, annually before the end of its fiscal year, submit to OTAB for review and approval,

"(a) a report outlining the labour force development outcomes achieved during the year; and

"(b) a plan for the next year's operations.

"Funding

"(8) OTAB may provide funding to designated local training and adjustment boards, in accordance with the regulations."

So moved by Ms Witmer.

Mrs Witmer: Yes. This amendment is intended to clarify the relationship between OTAB and the local boards and to ensure that the composition and the operation of the local boards are local responsibilities. As we well know, having sat on the committee and listened to the presentations, this is something that many of the presenters were asking to happen, that that relationship indeed be clarified regarding the composition and the operation, and of course they were looking for as much local autonomy as possible.

At the present time, Bill 96 is very ambiguous on the issue of local boards and how they will operate. That certainly was a grave concern to many of the presenters who appeared before us the past three weeks. There was a very strong feeling that Ontario's training programs must be locally driven. Presentation after presentation consistently stated that fact, that local boards must be allowed to be active and effective in responding to local training needs while OTAB provides a broad policy and accountability framework. They emphasized to us the need for this structure to be grass-roots rather than top-down, and we've heard that from both employees and employers.

This amendment, then, does provide for local empowerment. Decisions about the composition and the operation of local boards will take into account local wishes and will incorporate existing structures such as the CITCs. We all know that in many communities the local, existing structure, the CIRC, has done an absolutely outstanding job as far as taking into consideration what the local needs are and putting in place programs that would respond to those local wishes. There has been a great deal of cooperation.

OTAB will provide a policy, an accountability framework, and provide local boards with information about labour markets and existing services. Local boards, on the other hand, we are suggesting, need to be directly responsible for meeting the needs of the people they serve in their local community. They then will report annually to OTAB on training outcomes achieved and finances.

The Board of Trade of Metropolitan Toronto stated: "There is not enough emphasis enshrined in the bill regarding empowered, effective, client-driven local boards. It is important to recognize training as a local decision. Individuals or employers will not become committed because a centralized body called OTAB is created. Rather, it is involvement of local people and decision-making at the local level, combined with accessibility and responsiveness of the training services provided, which stimulates a personal and collective belief, commitment and action towards workplace training. The whole concept of OTAB and its eventual success will depend on how effectively local programs are delivered."

That was certainly a viewpoint that was shared by many, many others, and it's for this reason that we put forward this amendment today to clarify the relationship between OTAB and the local boards and the composition and the operation and that we stress to you the need for this to be a local responsibility.

The Chair: Ms Cunningham, please.

Mrs Cunningham: Since the parliamentary assistant seems to be interested, I'd like to go through the sections

with you, because a lot of them incorporate what you already have in the act. There are a couple of additions here, one of which I think you have put in an amendment yourself. So actually, we're not far apart on this.

I think it's the intent, as a result of the public hearings, that we expand upon just what we want in the area of local training and adjustment boards, some kind of a definition. The reason we did this, quite frankly, was to be helpful because of what was being stated by the members of the government at the beginning of the deliberations. That was the importance here of Employment and Immigration Canada and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board.

1540

I'm not sure you'll remember when I challenged, after a period of a couple of days of public consultation, the role of at least the member for Oxford, who kept saying: "We can't do any of this stuff without the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. They've given us our direction, it's in consultation with them, and after reviewing the Hansards we thought we had better make some reference to them in the act." I notice you haven't done that, but that's why we did it. It wasn't that we felt it was that important, but it certainly seemed important to the government. I think everybody will agree that that was what was stated in the first week over and over again.

Finally, I made a contact with the minister's office and they described to us what they felt the basic principles of the local boards ought to be, and I think there was a consensus within the committee that we certainly felt the same way. The fact that they underlined the basic principles—and we had been hearing it from the public all along—I think was very helpful, and that was that they were not married to the formula either of the OTAB board itself or of the committees, the 6-6-4-2 formula; that that could be changed and that it is up to the government of Ontario to take a look at that makeup; that the Canadian Labour Force Development Board felt that the local boards indeed should have control over local dollars to a certain extent.

I did ask the question, and I'll thank the government for responding to the question, how will local boards be funded? I very much appreciated the response I did get. I thought it was inclusive and it certainly clarified the matter for myself. Thank you very much for that.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am.

Mrs Cunningham: Beg pardon? No, I'm just starting. Did you say thank you?

The Chair: Yes. There will be a recess for 10 minutes.

Mrs Cunningham: Oh, all right.

The committee recessed at 1542 and resumed at 1607.

The Chair: We've had a quorum in the most technical sense for the last 10 minutes or so, but we will wait until the Conservative caucus is represented.

The committee recessed at 1607 and resumed at 1615.

The Chair: It's 4:15 and we shall continue to wait for a representative from the Conservative caucus.

[Later]

The Chair: Ms Cunningham, you had the floor.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I think the parliamentary assistant and I were focusing when you called a break. It's going to be hard to get our focus back, isn't it?

Mr Sutherland: Some would state that it's been hard to get the focus all along.

Mrs Cunningham: You're beginning to sound like myself, the member for Oxford.

Mr Sutherland: Should I take that as a compliment?

Mrs Cunningham: No. I wasn't being complimentary to myself. I have that problem from time to time. I have a lot to do. It's hard to focus. However, I'm getting focused here.

I was talking with regard to the composition and operation of the local training boards. Actually, I'm glad the member for Oxford is here, because I was mentioning his name before the break when he wasn't in the room. I was saying that there was a lot said about the importance of the Canadian Labour Force Development Board and how I think in the beginning it was stated that we were rather beholden to it in this legislation. I really think that wasn't quite correct. However, there was an impression made upon me, especially by the member for Oxford, of its importance and of the importance that we work with it very carefully, and with Employment and Immigration Canada. We actually put this into the legislation because we felt it was almost a necessity given the presentation from time to time by the members of the government.

I'll just very quickly follow through with the four basic principles. I've already mentioned that the Canadian Labour Force Development Board and Employment and Immigration Canada were not married to the formulas we established for our own—what do you call them, Mr Wilson, not local boards but the boards that advise OTAB?

Mr Gary Wilson: LTABs?

Mrs Cunningham: The reference boards or reference councils.

Mr Huget: Reference committees.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, committees, whatever. You know what I mean.

The local boards should have responsibilities for their own budgets—these are the basic principles—and the representation on the local boards should be grass-roots, bottom-fed. Members should be appointed locally and, wherever possible, other training boards that have been doing a good job and have been hooked into the training structure of communities, those members should be seriously considered, if not simply appointed to the local training boards. I've put that on the record before.

1620

Given all of those principles and given the Hansards as we read them—the emphasis by the government on the Canadian Labour Force Development Board—we put in section 1:

"OTAB shall, after consultation with Employment and Immigration Canada and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, designate local training and adjustment boards that have been established in accordance with the regulations made under this act."

The government has already agreed with us that it should be "shall" as opposed to "may."

We've expanded upon it. In the composition and operation, we talk about the priorities there. Actually, we've tried not to be too inclusive but to give general direction: The wishes and needs of a local community should be the first priority; the desirability of incorporating existing entities, such as community industrial training committees that provide labour force development programs and services—existing services that are there now ought to be incorporated—and the desirability of incorporating existing sectoral agreements that deal with labour force development.

This issue was raised many times, especially with regard to community-based and private trainers in relationship to the colleges. I think one of the issues that was brought to our attention along the way was the difficulty and the time-consuming challenge it has been for colleges to work through these sectoral agreements with school boards and others. It has been tremendously time-consuming. Certainly, in the composition and operation, anybody who has been involved in these sectoral agreements and can represent the work that's been done should be on these local training boards. That certainly was indicated to us by a number of presenters.

The role of OTAB: I think the government agrees with us in that regard so I won't speak to that to any extent. The role of the local boards is exactly the same as the government. Subsection 18(5), the designation is the same as what the government has in the bill now. Subsection (6) is also the same as what the government has now.

We have added subsections (7) and (8) with regard to an annual report and plan. This was a suggestion made by a number of people with regard to the accountability of this board:

"Each designated local training and adjustment board shall, annually before the end of its fiscal year, submit to OTAB for review and approval,

"(a) a report outlining the labour force development outcomes achieved during the year; and

"(b) a plan for the next year's operations."

I think everyone would agree that one of the great criticisms of the public with regard to public institutions is our lack of accountability. We've attempted to deal with that here. I think it's interesting that we have asked that the report outline the outcomes achieved. That's one thing that's been missing in training.

I know the parliamentary assistant would agree with me that it has been a very difficult job to measure the number of apprenticeship programs that have been entered into and the number of apprentices who have successfully graduated, the persons who began in those courses. I really feel that anybody who has been involved with the Ministry of Skills Development will know the challenges around this. We are making certain that this be part of an annual report so that we can improve upon any accomplishments and any suggestions from local board to local board.

"Funding

"(8) OTAB may provide funding to designated local training and adjustment boards, in accordance with the regulations."

This is simply a reassurance that local boards will receive training dollars. It is certainly consistent with the response to our question, how will local boards be funded?

That's what we've put forward with regards to one of the more important areas of this legislation—local training and adjustment boards. We've tried to put forward, I think, the best advice we could get in a very broad framework.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm pleased to comment on the elaboration of Ms Cunningham's motion, which she's already mentioned that we've adopted part of in an amendment of our own. But I certainly agree with her about the importance of the local training and adjustment boards. That was certainly what came through in the hearings: the enthusiasm, the commitment and the concern of local people that these things do the job that they're expected to do in the OTAB legislation.

On some of the specific points you've raised under subsection 18(1), in your proposal, for instance, you suggest that we mention the Canadian Labour Force Development Board, as we did refer to it in the hearings. In fact, it is listed among the objects in paragraph 4(17); it's listed there with other organizations that deal with labour force development so we will have the broad cross-section of views we can exchange with other agencies and organizations that deal with training.

Also, as to the composition and operation, the wishes and needs of the local community will certainly be taken into account. As to the community industrial training committees, we have heard that they have been a popular item in some communities. They've had, though, based on what we heard in the committee hearings, a mixed record, that in some places they worked well and other places they didn't work so well. As I mentioned earlier, they were operating completely without any regulations or legislation, just as a program. What we want to keep from the CITCs, where they worked well, is that record of commitment of the volunteers who worked on them; that idea that there are many people in a community who can volunteer their expertise and their time to make training programs work.

The other thing we're trying to do here is very thoroughly lay out legislation and regulations so that the local boards will exist in a structure in which we can make sure there is some accountability—which of course you also mention—in how they operate, to make sure that they do meet the wishes and needs of the local community; again with the idea that we don't see local boards as being a cookie cutter, but that they will reflect the characteristics and makeup of the areas they represent. We're doing this, though, because we think it is going beyond the CITCs to be more representative and, in that way, more effective in the role we're assigning them.

As I mentioned, we're certainly adopting the accountability; we think that's an important element. Some of the mechanisms that would be worked out, though, as far as they're concerned, would come through the regulations and are of an operational nature that doesn't have to be listed in legislation. We think that by adopting your suggestion of the mention of accountability, as we have in our amend-

ment, we are certainly making that clear that there will be an accountability mechanism of some kind established.

The way we've handled the local boards, by saying they will be set up through the legislation but leaving the actual description of them to the regulations, which will be established in consultation with the federal government, and then the operation through a similar way, they will best serve their function by having that flexibility but still grounded in the legislation and the regulations.

Mrs Cunningham: I have a question to the parliamentary assistant. I'm aware that paragraph 4(17) refers to the Canadian Labour Force Development Board. You just mentioned that it was important to confer with Employment and Immigration Canada; I think I heard you say that.

Mr Gary Wilson: I said the federal government, I think.

1630

Mrs Cunningham: I'm just wondering where you see the federal government in the bill right now, or Employment and Immigration Canada, one or the other.

Mr Gary Wilson: You mean the reference to the federal government? You see the reference to—

Mrs Cunningham: It might be there. I just don't see it. You've satisfied me with regard to the Canadian Labour Force Development Board.

Mr Gary Wilson: Legal counsel has pointed out section 29, to show that agreements can be entered into between the government of Ontario and the government of Canada. But the more pertinent section is under the objects.

Mrs Cunningham: It just proves that there's a bit of inconsistency here with regard to whom we talk to. But I don't want to hold anybody up in that regard.

Also, I'll remind you that although in two sections of this bill you're talking about OTAB itself establishing links with the Canadian Labour Force Development Board and, further on, the Canadian government and the Lieutenant Governor—that's fine, but I'm wondering what you have to say about the idea with regard to local training and adjustment boards.

Mr Gary Wilson: Sorry?

Mrs Cunningham: In the designation of the membership of the local training and adjustment boards. That's what we're referring to, not just as the objects, although I'm appreciative of the fact that it's been recognized. I'm thinking it would be important to consult with Employment and Immigration Canada and the Canadian Labour Force Development Board before they designate their local training and adjustment boards. Was that the intent of the object with regard to the Canadian Labour Force Development Board? Is that one of the intentions?

Mr Gary Wilson: Intentions of the local—

Mrs Cunningham: No, within the objects of the act, that this consultation take place around the designation of the local boards. Is that what you intended under section 4?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes. It's not just restricted to that, but that is one of the—

Mrs Cunningham: I know it's not restricted. I'm just saying, is that one of the intents?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

Mrs Cunningham: I didn't hear you talk about the annual report and plan. I'd like you to respond to that.

Mr Gary Wilson: I included that under the accountability that we are adopting from your suggestion and in our own amendment. That that is something, though, that's operational and can be worked into the regulations for the operation of the local boards.

Mrs Cunningham: Could I ask you if you're going to consider an annual report and plan as part of that framework of accountability?

Mr Gary Wilson: It's a reasonable suggestion. There are certainly other reports, as you know, from the accountability of OTAB itself, so it's consistent with that kind of accountability that's already there.

Mrs Cunningham: No, let's not mix it up. I actually think you're agreeing with me, but let's not mix it up. I understand that OTAB will have to make an annual report. They're only going to have \$600 million to account for, so I expect to see that in an annual report at least. But I'm wondering, because these boards are appointed, even though the principals there will be paid, if an annual plan and also a plan for the next year's operations will be part of your thinking for those boards, even though you don't want to put it in this format.

Mr Gary Wilson: Exactly. I agree with you, Ms Cunningham. As I say, the accountability is in the legislation, and that would be something suitable to the regulations.

Mrs Cunningham: What about the funding part, section 8? You didn't speak to that specifically. It's a "may"; it probably should be a "shall." Is that your intent, that you're going to put that somewhere else?

Mr Gary Wilson: It is under subsection 18(4) already.

Mrs Cunningham: Is that one we just picked up on, then?

Interjection: I think she just moved it in the motion they picked up.

Mrs Cunningham: I'm sorry. I thought I had seen it somewhere. It was much too recent for me to remember: short-term memory.

Mr Chairman, I've asked the questions I need to ask.

Mr Sutherland: If I could just add a couple of comments to this discussion, throughout this debate and discussion on this legislation, the opposition has asked for a lot of suggestions to be put right in the legislation. With regard to Ms Cunningham's motion, re, a lot of the ideas she's put forward—likewise with a lot of the ideas in Mr Ramsay's motion—are very good suggestions. They've been put forward, they're in Hansard, and obviously, the types of mechanisms they propose will be taken into consideration. I would hope that serious consideration will be given to them in terms of the processes that will eventually be set up for the local boards. If someone were to look at the Hansard of this committee at some point, they're going to try to think that the government has been intransigent

and unwilling to be flexible in terms of how these issues are resolved, and I think it needs to be clearly stated that that's not necessarily the case.

Where a lot of the difference is coming forward is over the question of whether it needs to go in the actual legislation to resolve it or whether it will be resolved in terms of the operations, the regulations, how the consultation process will end up. I think that is a very important point that needs to be mentioned. People need to be aware that, on many of the points the opposition is raising, because they're not agreed to doesn't mean they're going to be totally ignored in how the final operation of the OTAB board sets up and how the local boards will be operating and the type of accountability process that may exist.

Mrs Cunningham: I certainly appreciate the comments made by the member for Oxford. I just have a sort of underlying suggestion that has permeated these hearings from the very beginning: the challenge that all of us had in advising the government with regard to what the public said.

Most of the uncertainty in this legislation will be dealt with in the regulations, we're told. Even the basic principles the parliamentary assistant and I have just discussed around the makeup of local boards—that's just one small part—obviously they have given some serious consideration to. And they have made up their minds that certain principles we've discussed, as put forward in the amendments of both the Liberal critic and myself, have been considered by the government, and we've been assured that they're being considered as part of the regulations.

Do you know what I would have appreciated? I would have appreciated at least a list of some of the key areas of concern: the makeup of the local boards, perhaps; some of the roles of the local boards; the annual report and plan of the local boards. We've just discussed them; I'm being very specific. It would have been very helpful for all of us if the government had provided us with at least some kind of an outline as to what would appear in the regulations, and it would have been very helpful to the citizens if they knew that. I wouldn't have expected all of that to happen at the beginning of this week, but I would have expected some of it to happen by today.

It's been a long week and we didn't allow ourselves a lot of time between Thursday—the conclusion of our public input—and Monday afternoon before we had to have our amendments brought forward. I have seen, I think, one or two new ones—one new one—from the government since we started on Monday, but I'm just saying that it's this kind of frustration that all of us feel. I would have thought the government would have had an opportunity here to be a step above us in this regard, if in fact they have already considered the points that we've been making.

1640

We obviously, because of the answers to the questions, didn't take a strong view with the parliamentary assistant on this one. We preferred it in the legislation, but he responded that they were being considered for the regulations. But where they cannot be considered for regulations and where there has been an intransigence on behalf of the

government, which there has been for the majority of the regulations, we will be speaking to that down the road, and especially where we've asked a question where any member of this committee has not responded.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am. All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please raise your hand. Opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Now, with unanimous consent, we will stand aside—let's first deal, of course, with section 18. There was a motion made dealing with section 18(3.1). Mr Wilson, did you move that motion?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes, I did. Do you want me to move it again?

The Chair: Mr Wilson moved that section 18 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Role of OTAB

"(3.1) OTAB shall provide a broad policy and accountability framework for designated local training and adjustment boards."

That was your motion?

Mr Gary Wilson: It is.

The Chair: That remains outstanding because that was stood down by way of unanimous consent. There's no further discussion on this motion? Thank you. All those in favour?

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chair, could you say the number again, please?

The Chair: It's the motion that creates subsection (3.1).

Mrs Cunningham: The one that we—okay, fine. Thank you. I just wanted to make sure I was correct, especially if I was going to be voting with the government.

The Chair: All those in favour of Mr Wilson's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Mr Wilson's motion carries.

Now, Ms Cunningham, you have a motion?

Ms Cunningham moves that subsection 18(4) of the bill be amended by striking out "may" in the first line and substituting "shall."

Correct? Thank you. Do you want to speak to that?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, I do. With regard to the change here, we're basically changing a "may" to a "shall." I think the government did the same thing earlier. So I think there would be a great deal of confidence in this legislation on behalf of the presenters if in fact the government could reassure us in the bill that the councils, as subcommittees of the board of directors, the ones I was trying to describe earlier with the assistance of my colleague—it seems to me that the presenters really put a lot of faith in those councils. I'm just interested in how the government feels, because they are the ones here who have made it permissive, and there may be a good reason for that. If there's a good reason for it, I could be persuaded, but I can tell you that there seems to be a lot of weight put on these councils.

Everybody who couldn't get on the OTAB board itself talked about the clout they would have and the opportunities they would have on the council. So although we've defeated them on the board and said they couldn't be there, boy, could you imagine going back to the education sector

and what not and saying this is a permissive piece of legislation, especially in light of the other change that you made? So I would hope that you would give this some serious consideration, because I think it's parallel to the change that you felt was necessary as well.

Mr Gary Wilson: Our difficulty with it, though, Ms Cunningham, is that it's to retain some discretion over what kinds of boards are set up. We feel that we just want to list it as enabling rather than a duty. That's why the "may" appears rather than "shall."

Mrs Cunningham: I'm not going to take a lot of time in responding to that except to say that is the very fear we had and that's why we put it forward. You can call council or subcommittees anything you like as long as you can assure the presenters who have not won the kind of representation on the OTAB board itself—and I'm being very specific here: education. You're going to have to do something about that. There will be another opportunity for you. You may have to take this back to the minister, but I can assure you that it's a very serious issue. I would not have guessed it such, but I felt very strongly about the makeup of the OTAB board, and if we're now saying to educators that the education steering committee or the subcommittee won't receive the kind of consideration that they were planning on—

Mr Gary Wilson: I don't think we're talking about the same thing, Mrs Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Maybe we're not, then. Correct me.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'm looking at the funding to the local boards. You seem to be referring to the—

Mrs Cunningham: I'm looking at 19(1).

Mr Gary Wilson: Oh, I'm sorry. Yes, well, the one we're working on is 18(4). Have we got that wrong, Mr Chair?

Mr Sutherland: We're on 18.

Mr Offer: Subsection 18(4).

The Chair: But do basically the same arguments apply?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Cunningham. Mr Wilson, your position is that you disagree? Thank you.

Mr Gary Wilson: I'd like to deal with one at a time, please, just to be thorough. For subsection 18(4), that's the argument, but perhaps Ms Cunningham has a different argument.

Mrs Cunningham: Let me just look back at this. Actually, Mr Chair, you're very observant. It's exactly the same issue and it actually is in response to the question, "How will local boards be funded?" It seemed to me that there was a pretty well established fact that the local boards will have some of their own funding, given what you stated here. That's why we put the amendment forward, to assure them that they will. So both for 18(4) and 19(1), it's consistent with the amendment that you made under—

Mr Gary Wilson: Subsection 18(1).

Mrs Cunningham: Yes. You reassured the community by saying that in fact you would designate local training and adjustment boards, or "shall."

When the member for Oxford was speaking to this, I didn't see that there was any real fearmongering on behalf of anybody around that issue. I know you said that you thought there was, but I didn't. I just thought we should really say that this is a permanent part of the structure and a very important part, and not permissive, the local training boards.

I think our amendment to 18(4), given your answer to our question which led us to make the amendment—I think it's that kind of confidence that they need on the funding as well. That's all.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think our response comes out of the accountability that actually you raised and we've adopted; that is, for the government to be accountable to the public, because it's public money, after all. We want to make sure that the boards are doing the job they are set out to do, and in that sense, the money has to be discretionary. In other words, they get the money only if they are fulfilling the mandate that's set out in the regulations.

Then, going into 19(1), where the councils are, it's the same idea. If the councils aren't working out the way they should, we should have the ability to make changes so that they will do the job. But again, the reason for putting them there is to make sure that the widest consultation—I guess we've drawn the widest experience possible, which is what the idea of the councils is, to set up according to the various components of training to make sure that we canvass the views of the people who are involved in that.

Mrs Cunningham: Again, Mr Chairman, I think if all of us had seen the regulations with regard to the funding or with regard to the councils, it would have been easier for me to deal with this section. I am bringing forth the concerns as I heard them in the public hearings, and that's why I put forward the amendment. Thank you, Mr Chairman.

1650

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am.

Mrs Cunningham's motion is to amend subsection 18(4) of the bill by striking out "may" in the first line and substituting the word "shall."

All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

There is now, I understand, a need to deal with section 18, as amended. Any further discussion around section 18 of the bill, as amended? Shall section 18 of the bill, as amended, carry? Those in favour, please indicate. Opposed? Section 18, as amended, carries.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Sutherland didn't have his hand up very high. It was a tie vote, but—

You noticed that, didn't you, Mr Chairman?

The Chair: It is proposed that we deal with—I kept a careful notice of hands. Is there unanimous consent to proceed now to section 30 of the bill? Thank you very much. Mr Ramsay.

Mr Ramsay: Thank you very much, Mr Kormos. It's my understanding that there may be one word change,

difference, that would possibly allow the government to support my amendment, which is subsection 30(3). I will read my motion into the record.

I move that section 30 of the bill be amended by adding the following subsection:

"Community diversity

"(3) When a regulation is made under clause (1)(c), the importance of reflecting, in the composition of local training and adjustment boards, the diversity of the communities they are to serve shall be recognized."

The Chair: You're moving that subsection be added to section 30?

Mr Ramsay: That's correct, yes. Thank you, Mr Chair. I think if there was any point brought home by the over 179 different delegations that submitted presentations either orally or in writing, there was a sense that if OTAB is to work, there couldn't be, as the parliamentary assistant has said, a cookie cutter approach with regard to imposing a Queen's Park formula on the LTABs, but that the local boards had to be able to form themselves, obviously with guidance from OTAB, but to reflect in their composition the diversity of their communities. I think this is very important because, as we've all understood from other legislation, Ontario is an extremely diverse province. We have very different populations living in very different regions of our province, and it's so difficult to pass legislation—it is maybe the right solution for Toronto, but maybe not for Kenora etc. I think there needs to be flexibility, and that's why I've moved this motion. I would hope the government would be able to support this amendment.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Malkowski, please.

Mr Malkowski: It sounds like it would make sense to support this to reflect the diversity of the community and I think that I would ask other government members to consider supporting this as well.

The Chair: Thank you, sir. Mr Wilson, please.

Mr Gary Wilson: As Mr Ramsay has pointed out, there was certainly a lot of discussion about the composition of the local boards among the presenters and the submissions to our committee. I think that's what is very encouraging, in fact. And we know, again from the experience of some of the communities, that they've already been able to set up something that does begin at least to reflect the characteristics of the local area. So it is, I think, a good idea to set it out in this way, to suggest that this is what we are trying to do, to get away from what Richard Allen actually referred to as a cookie cutter approach, that the local boards have to reflect the local community, but also tie in—I think, again, diversity is something that has to be dealt with, but again it's where we derive our strength. It helps that the more completely the boards represent the local characteristics, then the better feel we'll have for what is necessary in communities. We're pleased to support this motion.

The Chair: All those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Mr Ramsay's motion carries.

Mrs Cunningham: God, that must have been painful for the government.

Mr Sutherland: No, it's not painful.

Mrs Cunningham: Maybe not, under the circumstances. Maybe I should have put "Government motion" on mine. Could we please put that in the Hansard? I'll say it again for Hansard. Maybe I should have written "Government motion" on mine and stroked it out and there might have been a whole—

The Chair: Mr Ramsay, you have a motion.

Interjection.

Mrs Cunningham: Listen, when Kimble Sutherland, the member for Oxford, grows up he will be a Conservative. I've told him that since the first day I met him.

Mr Gary Wilson: You're going to live to 150, are you?

The Chair: Do you want to withdraw your most recent motion or do you want to not move it?

Mr Ramsay: I will withdraw them because that was only housekeeping in order to be consistent with previous amendments I've moved that have been defeated, so I can withdraw those.

The Chair: You are not going to be moving that motion. Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: We're back to section 19, are we?

The Chair: In view of your support for Mr Ramsay's motion, you have a motion which would strike out clauses (a) and (b) of subsection 30(1). Just as Mr Ramsay declined to move his, you're going to decline to move that.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, I think I did make a note.

The Chair: Mr Offer, you have a motion that strikes out clause 30(1)(b). In view of your support of Mr Ramsay's motion, you're going to not move that. Thank you.

Mrs Cunningham: I withdraw clauses 30(1)(a) and (b).

The Chair: Ms Cunningham, you have a motion that addresses clause (k) of subsection 30(1) of the bill.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes, I do. This may be more difficult as time grows on—it's almost 5 o'clock—but it is clause 30(1)(k). We want to strike out clause (k), "fixing the amounts of fees for the purposes of section 21."

The Chair: Ms Cunningham, you're moving that subsection 30(1) of the bill be amended by striking out clause (k)?

Mrs Cunningham: Thank you, Mr Chairman. This is in relation to section 21 of the bill under "Miscellaneous," which we haven't got to yet, where we're talking about, "OTAB may charge fees for its services, in the amounts fixed by the regulations made under this act." There were numbers who said this should be out. We have made that amendment because we agree with them. We shouldn't actually be doing this one, Mr Chairman. It's with the assumption that section 21 passes that we do it. I have high hopes that it won't. But we can do it; it doesn't matter.

The Chair: Ma'am, you can withdraw your motion and reserve the right to bring it further in these proceedings.

Mrs Cunningham: I'll just see what the Liberals are doing to this.

1700

The Chair: My understanding—and why I don't have any qualms—is that if you are successful in persuading the members of this committee to support your motion, it matters not whether section 21 passes or not, because you've simply eliminated the right of the Lieutenant Government in Council to make regulations passing fees, which in itself negates section 21.

Mrs Cunningham: That's right—"fixing the amounts of fees for the purposes of section 21"—so the assumption is that 21 will stay in by dealing with it now.

The Chair: My reason for permitting this at this point is that if this passes you've also, in effect, nulled any impact of section 21.

Mrs Cunningham: That's right; it won't matter. You're quite right. Let's deal with it now.

The Chair: Any further discussion around Ms Cunningham's motion? All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion fails.

Mrs Cunningham: Back to section 19.

The Chair: Ms Cunningham, you have a motion that addresses subsection 30(2) of the bill.

Mrs Cunningham: No, I want to go back to 19 because it's unclear to deal with 30 now. We should be at 19 and go back and work through it, Mr Chairman, really.

The Chair: Is that the will of the committee? Thank you very much.

Mrs Cunningham: It's subsection 19(1). Remember, we stopped and moved over to 30 after we did 18. We're now at 19(1).

Mr Sutherland: Mr Chair, can I just get a clarification, though, if we're moving back to 19? We've dealt with all the amendments on 30? Have we ratified 30 or no?

The Chair: We haven't dealt with all the amendments.

Mr Sutherland: Thank you. That's all I wanted clarified.

Mrs Cunningham: It was becoming too confusing to go back.

Mr Sutherland: Sure. That's all I wanted clarified. Thank you.

The Chair: Ms Cunningham moves that subsection 19(1) of the bill be amended by striking out "may" in the first line and substituting "shall." You already made arguments to this motion when you spoke to your motion amending section 18. Do you wish those same arguments to apply to this motion?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes—

The Chair: And you move it as I've read it?

Mrs Cunningham: —and to expand upon them.

The Chair: Thank you. You want what?

Mrs Cunningham: To expand upon them.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I just want to reiterate for a moment with regard to the councils, because I really do want to ask a question of the parliamentary assistant on this one. He talked about the work of these councils or the subcommittees of the board of directors as being a criterion

for the government to establish them. I just want to make certain that this is why he in fact won't agree or doesn't think he should agree to making this mandatory within the act, which would then agree with our amendment striking out "may" and substituting "shall." I just want to ask him again why he doesn't agree that this ought to be mandatory.

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right. The "may" makes it enabling rather than mandatory. We think that for the best accountability in the one case the local boards and in the other the councils have to be doing their job. This gives it more accountability to the government.

Mrs Cunningham: Although the parliamentary assistant has given us his rationale, it seems to me that the strength of the board has been the advice it's been getting from the councils and the subcommittees, and to this date those kinds of groups have been relied on heavily. The parliamentary assistant has presented the rationale for not supporting the amendment. I'm surprised, quite frankly, that these specialized committees are not going to be required by legislation. I'm surprised that you don't want to make this mandatory, that this structure wouldn't be necessary in any format to the OTAB itself. I can't imagine not having this kind of structure.

Mr Gary Wilson: Nor can we, but we're not sure exactly what form it's going to take. If it doesn't work, then adjustments would have to be made in them, that's all. It just allows us to do that without tying us down to one form in the legislation. When you talk about accountability I think it's very important that the government is able to make the adjustments it needs.

Mrs Cunningham: Is it your intent, then, as a government that if you do change the format, you come back and report to the House? How do you go about changing the councils or subcommittees of the board of directors? If you wanted a totally different format, how would you deal with it?

Mr Gary Wilson: That would be done in consultation with the labour market partners, through OTAB, and that allows the government discretion through the regulations. The regulations are designed in consultation with the OTAB directors. I'm not sure, though, Ms Cunningham, whether you're not referring to the reference groups when you mention the educators and trainers.

Mrs Cunningham: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: Those are actually reference groups. There are councils which serve a different function.

Mrs Cunningham: Would you like to describe how many councils and what function they do?

Mr Gary Wilson: We expect there'll be four councils at this point.

Mrs Cunningham: Can you tell me the functions of the four councils?

Mr Gary Wilson: The councils have to do with the components of training: entry and re-entry, apprenticeship, labour adjustment, and sectoral and workplace training. Those are the four envisaged now, but as I say, there is a possibility that there could be more or that there could be

fewer, depending on the kinds of negotiations or discussions that go on with OTAB.

Mrs Cunningham: But even if there are more or fewer, I can't see the problem with changing to "shall." Obviously within the regulations you're going to talk about the kind of things you need, but a number of groups came forward and said that councils should be mandatory, that the government should work with that model. As a matter of fact, I don't understand why you wouldn't at least put the model in the legislation. You have all kinds of discretion as to changing the makeup of the councils or the purpose of the councils within the regulations. That's what it says here.

Mr Gary Wilson: We believe this gives us the most discretion. Certainly we've listened to both the presenters to the committee as well as the earlier consultation. We think this will serve the purpose, by addressing the need both for councils and for reference groups.

Mrs Cunningham: So the local training and adjustment boards are mandatory, the funding is permissive and the councils are permissive?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

The Chair: All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion amending subsection 19(1) of the bill, please indicate. Opposed? Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

Mrs Cunningham: I won't go into shock about that, but we'll take a look at subsection 19(5), the same reassurance around the—

The Chair: Do you want to move the motion, please?

Mrs Cunningham: I'm sorry. I move that subsection 19(5) of the bill be amended by striking out "may" in the first line and substituting "shall."

Again, at the request of a number of presenters, with regard to the remuneration and the expenses in accordance with the regulations, I'm not certain how one could be permissive about that, but I find it interesting that this government chooses to be that way. I'm certain that they're not being represented by a labour union at this point, because if they were, I can assure you that in any collective agreement people actually would insist on the word "shall" with regard to their own remuneration and expense payments in accordance with the regulations. But I'd be interested to hear the debate from the parliamentary assistant on this one.

Mr Gary Wilson: When you mention a labour union, that's a different kind of accountability structure, which is a contract. This is legislation, and what we're trying to do here is build in accountability that the government, since it's public money, has to have to make sure that the councils, in this case, are doing their job.

Mrs Cunningham: Which infers that labour unions aren't. Your analogy was that this is different, you need accountability, and labour unions aren't accountable in that regard. I'll buy that.

1710

Mr Gary Wilson: No, I said that it was a different structure, a different accountability model.

Mrs Cunningham: Very different.

Mrs Witmer: I'm not sure that I understand the reasoning here, in either one of the arguments. Why are you not paying council members remuneration and expenses? Why was that decision made?

Mr Gary Wilson: Why we're not?

Mrs Witmer: Yes. Mrs Cunningham has put forward a motion to change the "may" to "shall" and you simply want to stay with "may," leaving it optional. I guess I'm asking you, why are council members not going to be receiving payment in the form of remuneration and expenses?

Mr Gary Wilson: Ms Witmer, there's nothing here that says they won't receive remuneration. The way it's set out is that, again, it's discretionary on the part of the government, for the reasons I mentioned, the accountability.

Mrs Witmer: I'm not sure what accountability has to do with whether or not you pay them.

Mr Gary Wilson: Again, it says "according to the regulations." The regulations will set out what council members have to fulfil, and if they, for some reason or another, don't fulfil those obligations, then they wouldn't be paid, whereas if the legislation said they had to be paid, they would have to be paid under any circumstances.

Mrs Witmer: Are you going to set up sort of a system where you tick off whether or not they've fulfilled their duties and those who do will be paid and those who don't will not be paid? Is that what you're saying? I mean, it doesn't make much sense.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think the public expects us to be accountable with public money, so there will be some mechanism.

Mrs Witmer: I don't think that's at all what's intended in the legislation. I think this is simply consistent with 19(1), which says, "OTAB may establish councils," and in the same way you've said OTAB may pay those council members. I don't think accountability has anything to do, whatsoever, with this section at all.

Mr Gary Wilson: Okay, I will just say it again: The matters have to be worked out through regulation and that's where the details will be set, not in legislation.

Mr Offer: I have a question on this matter. The way it reads now, there will be a regulation that will say a council member will get, upon attendance, maybe expenses or a per diem; something like that, it will read. That would be by regulation. So that person goes to the council. There would be a discretion on the part of OTAB as to whether to pay that person the dollars in accordance with the regulation—

Mr Gary Wilson: No, if the regulation says they're paid, as you are outlining it, then they would be paid. That's what the regulation would stipulate.

Mr Offer: What would this address itself to then? The subsection says "remuneration."

Mr Gary Wilson: It's simply enabling. It sets out that the government can pay, or through OTAB can pay the—

Mr Offer: Let's put it into our language. We're on this committee. The Legislature isn't sitting. We get X amount of dollars per day to sit here. That's by agreement. The way I read this is that although we are entitled to that, if

OTAB, or in this case let's say the Chair of the committee, says, "Well no, those persons shouldn't be paid," even though the regulations say that—

Mrs Cunningham: But we're not normally on this side of the argument; I want to assure you of this.

Mr Offer: I just want to get an idea as to what this actually means. It's quite intriguing.

Mr Gary Wilson: It will be by regulation. That's where that's set out, and if the regulation says that they would be paid, then OTAB would pay it. However, for budgeting accountability, it has to be enabling in the legislation itself.

Mr Offer: Well, it must be the time of day for me, because if the regulation says that a council member shall be paid X amount of dollars and the council member is there, then what role does OTAB have to play?

Mr Gary Wilson: OTAB will be part of the regulation.

The Chair: For the assistance of legislative research, is this section designed to put OTAB as a corporate or quasi-corporate body in a position where, by law, it is permitted to pay when regulations prescribe that it must?

Mr Gary Wilson: Yes.

The Chair: Legislative research is grateful.

All those in favour of Ms Cunningham's motion, please indicate. Opposed to Ms Cunningham's motion? Please take your seats when you vote. Ms Cunningham's motion is defeated.

We are now addressing section 19. Is there any further debate?

Mr Offer: Which one?

The Chair: Section 19. Any debate or discussion around section 19 of the bill? All those in favour of section 19? That is to say, shall section 19 carry?

Mr Offer: Recorded vote.

The Chair: A recorded vote. Please raise your hands and keep your hands raised until your name is called.

Ayes

Haeck, Huget, Malkowski, Martin, Sutherland, Wilson (Kingston and the Islands).

The Chair: All those opposed, please raise your hands and keep your hands raised until your name is called.

Nays

Brown, Cunningham, Offer, Witmer.

The Chair: Section 19 of the bill carries. We are now addressing section 20 of the bill. Mr Ramsay has a motion that he's tabled addressing subsection 20(1).

Mr Offer: By way of clarification, did Mr Ramsay indicate that he was withdrawing this motion or not?

The Chair: Not to me.

Mr Offer: Okay. Then I will move, on behalf of Mr Ramsay, that subsection 20(1) of the bill be struck out and the following substituted:

"Reference committees

"(1) Reference committees shall be established, in accordance with the regulations, by the groups named in

subsection 9(2), and by the group named in section 10 if an additional director has been appointed under that section.”

I believe the motion speaks for itself.

Mr Brown: I thought so too.

The Chair: Mr Wilson, you don't agree with the proposition contained in the motion?

Mr Gary Wilson: If it speaks for itself, it doesn't do a very good job. In any case, the problem is there is no identifiable person to whom this duty attaches.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr Wilson. There being no further debate around Mr Ramsay's motion, as moved by Mr Offer, all those in favour of Mr Ramsay's motion, as moved by Mr Offer, please indicate. Opposed? Mr Ramsay's motion, as moved by Mr Offer, is defeated. Ms Cunningham.

Mrs Cunningham: I move that subsection 20(1) of the bill be amended by striking out “may” in the first line and substituting “shall.”

These are the reference committees, Mr Chairman, that were referred to by the parliamentary assistant, and again we find ourselves in a position that this is probably where we should have put most of our emphasis. These were the committees that wanted to be reassured that they would be there as part of the bill, and mandatory as opposed to permissive. So perhaps in responding to this motion, the parliamentary assistant would kindly describe the reference committees for us and perhaps his rationale for not making them mandatory but, rather, permissive.

1720

Mr Gary Wilson: In this case, for a reference committee to be stipulated, there has to be a person who could be identified to whom the duty applies. You can't make it mandatory where there's nobody identifiable who would be there for it to apply to.

Mrs Cunningham: But wasn't the reason for not moving from “may” to “shall” on the other committees that they were identified and therefore would be exclusive; it would be exclusive if in fact we expanded upon it?

Mr Gary Wilson: I didn't quite follow that, but—

Mrs Cunningham: No. You said before that where we have made lists or been specific in our identification, you would not in fact accept that as part of the legislation because there may be someone excluded, there may be a group excluded. Now you're saying that we in fact—well, actually, I shouldn't try to say what you said. Why don't you say it again with regard to “exclusionary”? Say what you said all over again, because obviously I feel that you were contradicting yourself.

Mr Gary Wilson: I will let Kathleen explain this and then I will add something to it.

Ms Kathleen Beall: Perhaps I can assist the committee in this regard. I addressed this issue, I believe it was yesterday or the day before, explaining why in this particular instance, for legal reasons, there are problems with changing the word from “may” to “shall.” The section says that reference committees may be established; it makes it possible that reference committees be established pursuant to this legislation. If the wording is changed to “reference

committees shall be established,” the question first arises that you have now created a statutory duty, but who has that duty?

You go on in the rest of the subsection and it says “reference committees may be established by the groups named in subsection 9(2),” which lists what are known as labour market partners, so it says “shall be established by representatives of business.” There's no identifiable individual for that business. Does that mean that all business people across the province must get together to establish a reference group?

Similarly, a reference group would by perhaps, let's say, francophones. Again, who? There's no identifiable person to whom that duty applies. From a legal perspective, setting out a duty in legislation where there's no identifiable person to whom that duty attaches is improper creation of law from a legal level. There's no identifiable person who is to make the reference groups. There's a term which applies to a class or a group of people, but there's no identifiable person.

The Chair: Thank you, ma'am.

Mrs Cunningham: Mr Chairman, I don't follow that. I'm not trying to be disrespectful, but if we're talking about the duty and choosing from within large groups, obviously there's a duty involved in subsection 9(2) to begin with and we're choosing from large groups.

I wouldn't begin to ask you whose responsibility it would be in this instance to strike the group of eight directors—and you can respond if you want to, I certainly understand—and the only one that's specific would be—and it isn't even specific in here, it's the intent of the government—is with regard to organized labour. They do have a group.

I don't understand, really, the problem with regard to these reference committees. You're saying if we say “shall,” the responsibility is a duty for the appointment, or who sits on them, right?

Ms Beall: That's right. If you make it a “shall,” you make it a statutory obligation, but there's no person to whom that obligation attaches. So it's legally a problem to create a duty without identifying who has that duty.

Mrs Cunningham: I guess my response to that is, then we've got a very big problem with section 9, because there's no person again on whom this responsibility could be conferred, even in the appointment of the directors, if we took that argument a step further. At least, I don't understand that.

Ms Beall: Perhaps just to explain further, in subsection 9(3) it says, “Each director shall be selected in consultation with organizations.” Is that the subsection you're referring to?

Mrs Cunningham: That's fine.

Ms Beall: What that means is that the Lieutenant Governor does the appointment and the appointment is done after there has been a selection “in consultation with,” so that duty falls on the government to consult.

Mrs Cunningham: You're saying we could correct this by adding another amendment and making the duty to

appoint the responsibility of the government, and then it would work.

Ms Beall: If you did that, you would have a policy change, and at that point it would be a different issue. That would be up to you—

Mrs Cunningham: Okay, I understand now.

If we go to "shall," we have to add to our amendment in order to make it comply. Mr Chairman, given that advice, under subsection 20(1), "Reference committees may be established, in accordance with the regulations made under this act, by the groups named in subsection 9(2) and section 10;" adding to that, we will say that each member of the reference committee—I'm tabling this just for consideration by the committee. I understand it wouldn't be fair to deal with it today.

Mr Gary Wilson: Could I tell you what we have done, though?

Mrs Cunningham: Yes. That's great. If you're going to be helpful, you can do that, yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: As I mentioned, I would add something to what Kathleen said laying out the legal—and as she pointed out, that would be a policy change. The reason we are doing it this way is that we want the labour market partners to determine whom they want to see on the reference committees.

Mrs Cunningham: So do I. My amendment only assumes that the labour market partners should be on these committees. I'm now looking at 9(3). I assume that even with "each director shall be selected in consultation with organizations representing the group that the director is to represent," the intent there is that the labour market partners be represented. Certainly, our intent with regard to section 20 on the reference committees would be that whatever the title of that reference committee would be, and you've already given us some examples of that, that those reference committees—

Mr Gary Wilson: Wait, now. The reference committees are tied to the labour market partners—

Mrs Cunningham: Yes.

Mr Gary Wilson: —to advise them and to give them information about where they see the needs for training, just to keep them in touch with what's happening in the community. They're different from the councils.

Mrs Cunningham: I understand that, but a good example of that would be the reference committee for education. Correct me if I'm wrong here. That's why I'm being insistent and I need your help. If you've got some ideas, tell me, but these people want to know that if there are just two representatives from the education sector, they get the best advice they can through the reference committees. Is that how it's going to work or otherwise? Is that the intent?

Mr Gary Wilson: That's right.

Mrs Cunningham: If that's the intent, then I really feel it's incumbent upon the government to give this more thought. When the education groups asked for further representation—the five seats would have been preferable—they were reassured that in fact the reference committees would be advising the board, hopefully a reference com-

mittee to business or labour or francophones or women or people with physical disabilities or whatever, and education would be speaking to its representatives first. That's usually how it works to get to the detail.

That's all we're saying, that they be reassured that they in fact "shall" be established. I understand what legal counsel is saying, and I think I have to add to section 20 to make it work within the legislation itself. I'm going to need some time to do that.

Mr Gary Wilson: I was hoping that with our explanation of why we're doing it this way—as Ms Beall pointed out, it's a policy change, and the reason we're going this way is that we think it will work through the setting of regulation, because again, that is done in consultation with the labour market partners.

1730

Mrs Cunningham: Perhaps the appropriate thing for me to do at this point in time, given the hour, is to ask the parliamentary assistant if, when the committee resumes, we could have some response to the regulations, and this very point is a good example. How will the regulations then give confidence to—and I'll be specific—the education reference committee that it will have the kind of authority that was inferred through answers to questions by the parliamentary assistant and questions by members of the committee but, more importantly, responses to the citizens who came before the committee—they say "witnesses" but I don't like that word—who came before the committee with this concern? I think it's a real concern. It gives the government an opportunity to respond to it, and if the response is helpful, then perhaps we could move on.

Mr Gary Wilson: I think we already have responded in the way that we're proposing to go about this. Again it comes after consultation with the labour market partners, and in the overall thrust of OTAB, where it's driven by the people with needs for training rather than those who are supplying it, and that again goes back to the structure of the directors.

Just so there will be a possibility of as wide a consultation and input as possible, we're setting up, as part of the structure, the reference committees. These will be established again with the consultation of the directors, and of course there are two directors from the educators and trainers. The regulations for those committees will be established in consultation with them, and we have to set up OTAB and have the directors appointed before that can happen.

Mrs Cunningham: I'll just close, Mr Chairman. The parliamentary assistant did say "will be"; it says here "may be." You know better than I the interchange between the words "will" and "shall," but we want regulations to assure the groups.

The Chair: You may as well ask legislative research to obtain for you the case law which judicially interprets the word "may" to mean "shall," but that's merely a suggestion.

Mrs Cunningham: That would be helpful, thank you, and I do ask that.

The Chair: That case law flourishes. There are piles of it. In any event, you're asking for that as well, because that might shed some insight into what counsel has been trying to tell the committee.

Mrs Cunningham: That would be great.

The Chair: It is now 5:32. This committee had agreed to sit until 5:30 today and that satisfies the period of time that was set aside by the motion in the House.

Before we leave, I want to make special note of the fact that while members of the committee have worked very hard and steadily throughout the week, there have been a number of staff persons who have provided great assistance to us: Adrian James from legislative broadcast services; and of course Deborah Caruso and Peggy Brooks from Hansard, who have been very patient and very cooperative; Anne Anderson, legislative research who has been monitoring the committee all week and providing us with ongoing input by way of research materials; Cornelia Schuh, a legislative counsel has been with us; and Tannis Manikel, the clerk who, as always, has been very efficient and very effective in performing her duties.

In particular, I want to thank Mr Huget, Mr Farnan and Mr Sutherland for assisting me in sitting in the Chair over the course of this week. I want to thank the members of the committee, of all caucuses, for the good-natured spirit with which they engaged in the discussion and the debate during

the course of the week, their patience with me and their cooperation with me as a Chair. I am particularly grateful to them.

I want to thank the staff of the Ministry of Skills Development for their assistance to the committee during the course not only of this past week but of course the three weeks prior. I want to note that since my term or tenure as Chair expires on April 13—and whether or not I'm Chair of course depends upon the whim of the Premier's office—I want to tell the people in this committee that I am particularly grateful and gratified that this was the last set of hearings that I've been able to chair during this term as Chair. I obviously look forward to the opportunity to keep on doing it, but I recognize that you can't always get what you want.

I want to thank especially, once again, the members of the committee for not only the past four weeks but for the previous several months—high levels of cooperation, high levels of patience and tolerance on the part of staff and committee members. I have indeed learned a great deal about any number of things, including human nature, during that period of time.

I thank you. There's no need to adjourn, because this committee has exhausted its mandate as it exists now.

The committee adjourned at 1735.

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Ontario Training and Adjustment Board Act, 1993, Bill 96 R-1933

STANDING COMMITTEE ON RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT

***Chair / Président:** Kormos, Peter (Welland-Thorold ND)

***Vice-Chair / Vice-Président:** Huget, Bob (Sarnia ND)

Conway, Sean G. (Renfrew North/-Nord L)

Dadamo, George (Windsor-Sandwich ND)

Jordan, Leo (Lanark-Renfrew PC)

Klopp, Paul (Huron ND)

McGuinty, Dalton (Ottawa South/-Sud L)

Murdock, Sharon (Sudbury ND)

***Offer, Steven** (Mississauga North/-Nord L)

Turnbull, David (York Mills PC)

Waters, Daniel (Muskoka-Georgian Bay ND)

Wood, Len (Cochrane North/-Nord ND)

*In attendance / présents

Substitutions present / Membres remplaçants présents:

Brown, Michael A. (Algoma-Manitoulin L) for Mr McGuinty

Cunningham, Dianne (London North/-Nord PC) for Mr Turnbull

Haeck, Christel (St Catharines-Brock ND) for Ms Murdock

Malkowski, Gary (York East/-Est ND) for Mr Wood

Marchese, Rosario (Fort York ND) for Ms Murdock

Martin, Tony (Sault Ste Marie ND) for Mr Klopp

Ramsay, David (Timiskaming L) for Mr Conway

Sutherland, Kimble (Oxford ND) for Mr Dadamo

Wilson, Gary (Kingston and The Islands/Kingston et Les Îles ND) for Mr Waters

Witmer, Elizabeth (Waterloo North/-Nord PC) for Mr Jordan

Also taking part / Autres participants et participantes:

Beall, Kathleen, legal counsel, OTAB project, Ministry of Education and Training

Landry, Peter, director, organizational design and labour relations, OTAB project, Ministry of Education and Training

Wilson, Gary, parliamentary assistant to the Minister of Education and Training

Clerk / Greffière: Manikel, Tannis

Staff / Personnel: Schuh, Cornelia, deputy chief legislative counsel

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